PEACE MAKER™ 3

ピースメーカー

Nanae
Chrono

PEACE MAKER

Peace Maker Volume 3
Created By Nanae Chrono

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PEACE MAKER

ピースメーカー

Volume 3

by Nanae Chrono

ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE

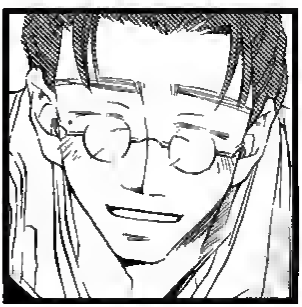
HIJIKATA'S PAGE

BRASH TETSU HAS JOINED THE SHINSENGUMI TO LEARN TO BECOME STRONG. HE WANTS TO GET REVENGE ON HIS PARENTS' MURDERERS, CHOUSHUU REBELS. ALTHOUGH HE JOINED THE SHINSENGUMI WITH ASPIRATIONS OF BECOMING A SWORDSMAN, HE'S BEEN ASSIGNED THE THANKLESS DUTY OF HIJIKATA'S PAGE.

HIJIKATA TOSHIZOU

VICE COMMANDER

BECAUSE OF HIS COLD DEMEANOR AND BRUTALITY, HE IS KNOWN AS THE "DEMON VICE COMMANDER."



YAMANAMI KEISUKE

VICE COMMANDER

THIS BUDDHA-LIKE VICE COMMANDER COULDN'T BE LESS LIKE HIJIKATA. HE'S OFTEN SEEN CARRYING HIS ABACUS.

OKITA SOUJI

CAPTAIN OF THE FIRST SQUAD

THE BEST SWORDSMAN IN THE SHINSENGUMI. HE'S GENERALLY CALM AND FRIENDLY, BUT WIELDING A BLADE CAN TRANSFORM HIM INTO A HEARTLESS KILLER.

KITAMURA SUZU

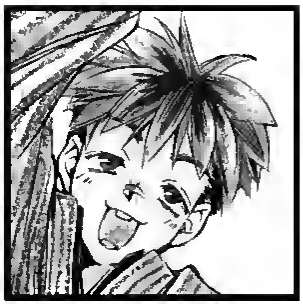
A BOY WITH SILVER HAIR. HE HAS NO FAMILY AND LIVES WITH HIS MASTER, YOSHIDA TOSHIMARO. HE AND HIS MASTER OPPOSE THE SHINSENGUMI.

KONDOU ISAMI

DIRECTOR

A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE SHINSENGUMI AND ALSO A MASTER AT THE SHIEIKAN DOJO IN EDO, THE MAIN DOJO OF THE TENNEN RISHIN STYLE.

MAIN CHARACTERS



NAGAKURA SHINPACHI

CAPTAIN OF THE SECOND SQUAD

SMALL BUT STRONG A SWORDSMAN LIKE OKITA. HE FIGHTS IN THE SHINTO-MUNEN SCHOOL STYLE.

TOUDOU HEISUKE

CAPTAIN OF THE EIGHTH SQUAD

ONE OF THE THREE STOOGES OF THE SHINSENGUMI. HE LIKES CUTE THINGS, INCLUDING TETSU.

HARADA SANOSUKE

CAPTAIN OF THE TENTH SQUAD

A GIANT AMONG MEN, HE'S A MASTER OF THE SPEAR IN THE HOZOIN SCHOOL STYLE. HE'S GOOD FRIENDS WITH SHINPACHI.

ICHIMURA TATSUNOSUKE

TETSU'S OLDER BOTHER AND GUARDIAN. HE'S ALWAYS WORRYING ABOUT TETSU. TATSU WANTS NOTHING TO DO WITH SWORDFIGHTING, AND IS A BOOKKEEPER FOR THE SHINSENGUMI.

YAMAZAKI SUSUMU

SHINSENGUMI NINJA

A SPY FOR THE SHINSENGUMI, HE REPORTS TO HIJIKATA. TACITURN AND COLD, HE HOLDS MANY SECRETS

SAYA

TETSU SAVED HER FROM SOME RUFFIANS, AND NOW THE TWO ARE FRIENDS. SAYA CANNOT SPEAK, BUT COMMUNICATES THROUGH HAND GESTURES AND WRITING.

SHINSENGUMI MEMBERS

PERSONS OUTSIDE THE SHINSENGUMI

THE STORY OF PEACE MAKER

IN THE FIRST YEAR OF GENJI, 186H, JAPAN WAS IN GREAT TURMOIL. MILITANT AND XENOPHOBIC FORCES, WHICH HAD LONG OPPOSED THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE, ADVOCATED EXPELLING WESTERN INFLUENCE AND RESTORING THE EMPEROR IN KYOTO TO POWER. TO PROTECT THE SHOGUNATE'S INTEREST IN KYOTO, A LEGENDARY PEACEKEEPING FORCE WAS FORMED FROM TWO HUNDRED-SOME RONIN. THEY WERE THE SHINSENGUMI. THIS IS THE STORY OF ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE, WHO SOUGHT TO JOIN THEM.

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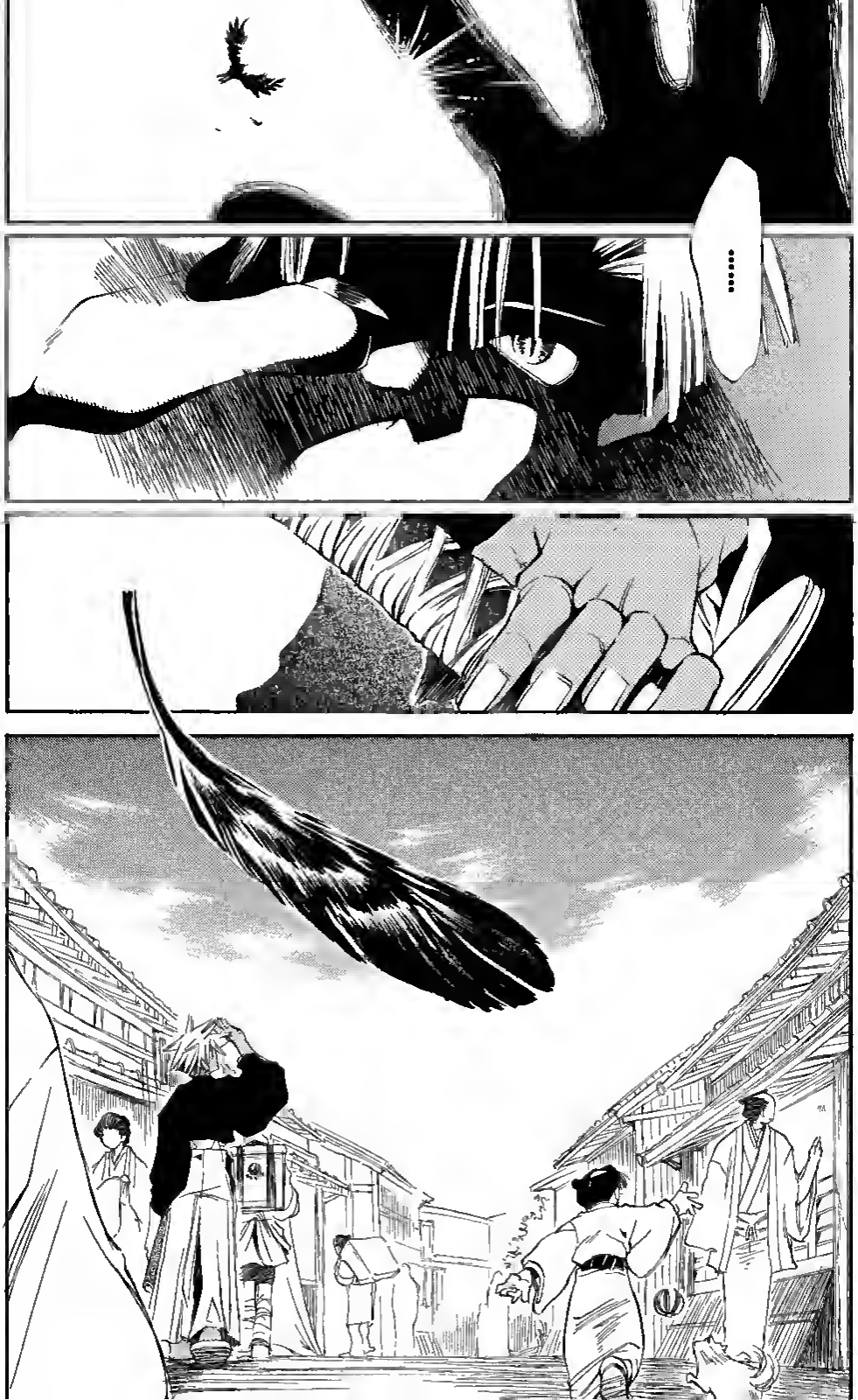
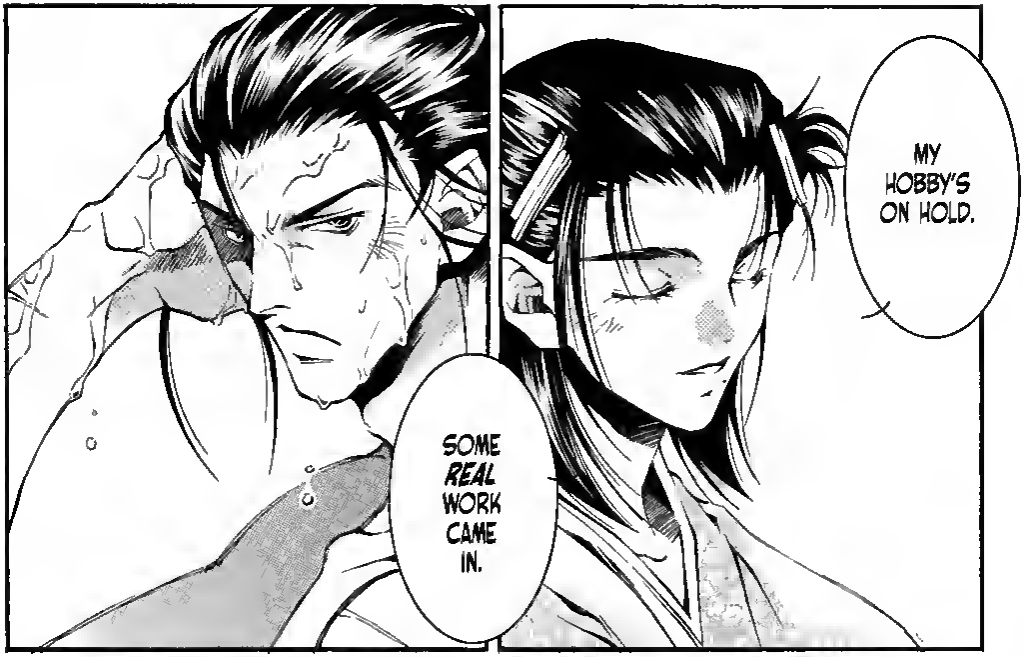

……

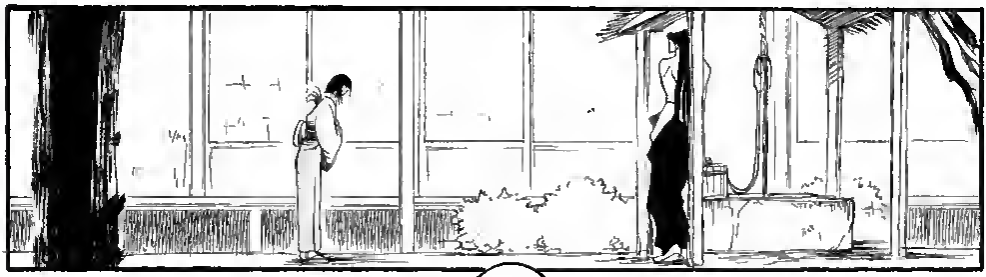
Act.12
Nowhere Man

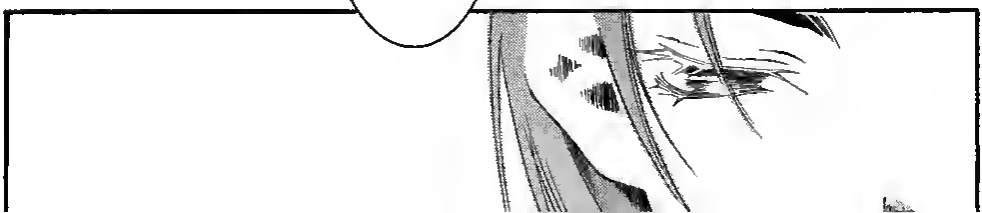
.....
IS HE YOUR PAWN, TOO?

DOING IT AGAIN...
IS IT THAT REPULSIVE TO ME?

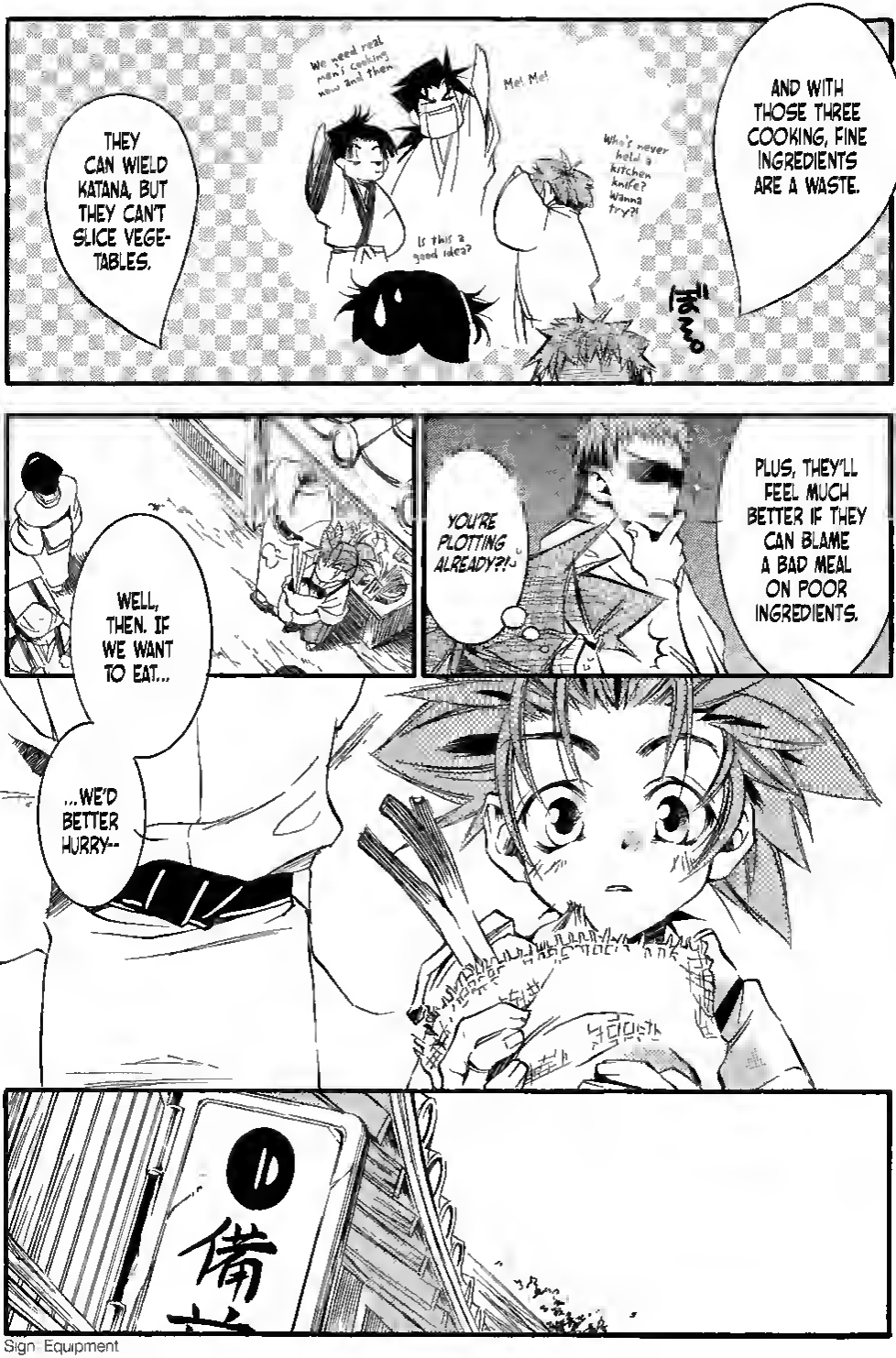
YOU LOOK DISTURBED.
WHAT A SURPRISE.
SHOULDN'T YOU BE WORKING ON DINNER?
THIS IS THE FACE I WAS BORN WITH.


MY HOBBY'S ON HOLD.
SOME *REAL* WORK CAME IN.

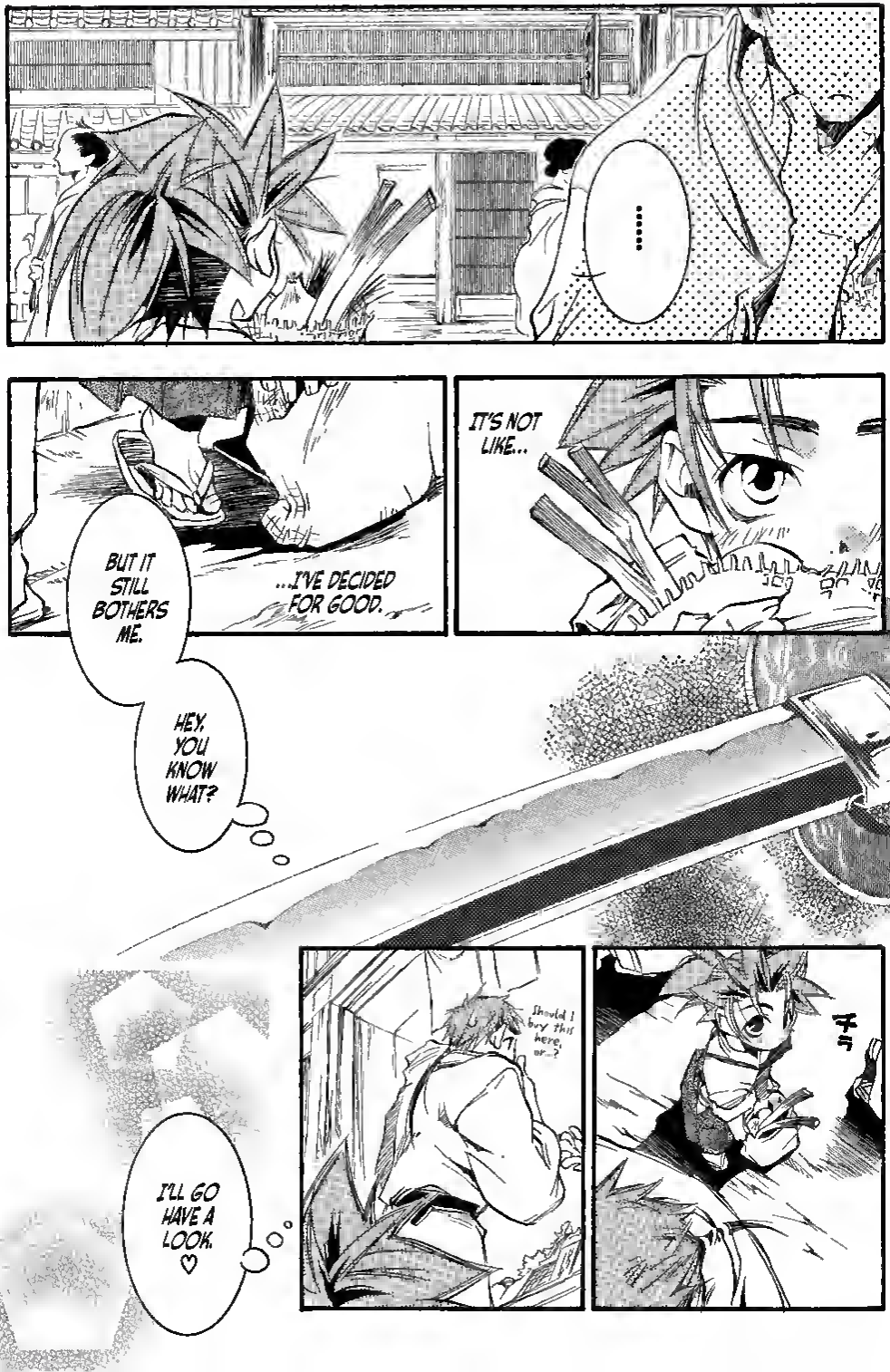



AND I'VE DECIDED...
...TO ACCEPT THE JOB.

C'MON!
TATSUUU!
C'MON! C'MON!
WILL YOU SHUT UP?!
You're screwing up my calculations!!
CAN I GO BACK NOW?!
MY ARMS HURT! WHO CARES HOW MUCH IT COSTS? JUST BUY WHATEVER!
Shut up and let me shop
...YOU MUST SPEND MONEY WISELY, NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU HAVE.
TETSU...
IT'S NOT EVEN OUR MONEY!
むすーっ
WE AREN'T POOR ANYMORE! YOU CAN BUY THE GOOD STUFF NOW!


THEY CAN WIELD KATANA, BUT THEY CAN'T SLICE VEGETABLES.
We need real men's cooking now and then.
Me! Me!
Who's never held a kitchen knife? Wanna try?!
Is this a good idea?
AND WITH THOSE THREE COOKING, FINE INGREDIENTS ARE A WASTE.
WELL, THEN. IF WE WANT TO EAT...
...WE'D BETTER HURRY--
YOU'RE PLOTTING ALREADY?!
PLUS, THEY'LL FEEL MUCH BETTER IF THEY CAN BLAME A BAD MEAL ON POOR INGREDIENTS.
備

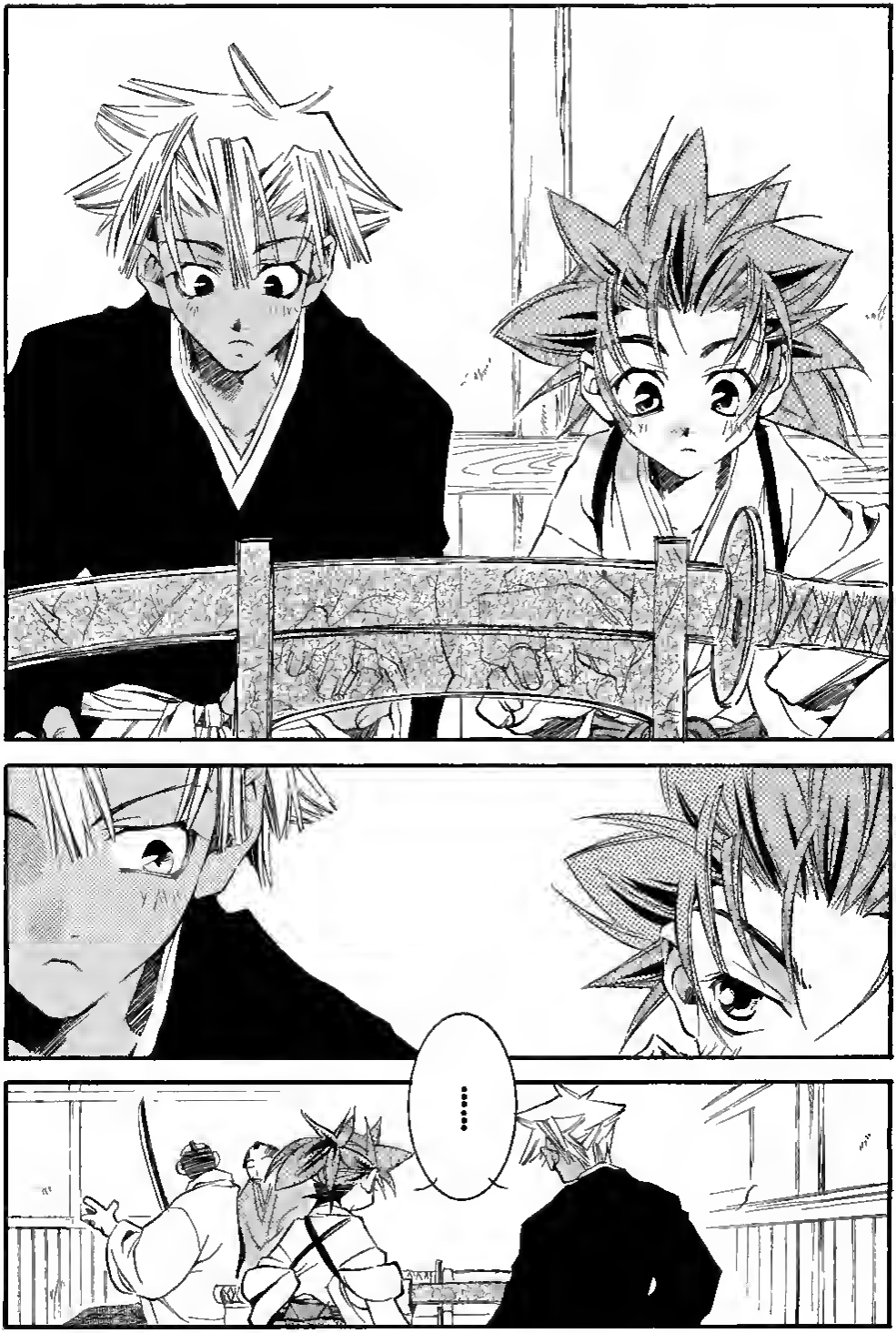
Sign: Equipment


.....
IT'S NOT LIKE...
...I'VE DECIDED FOR GOOD.
BUT IT STILL BOTHERS ME.
HEY, YOU KNOW WHAT?
Should I buy this here, or...?
I'LL GO HAVE A LOOK. ♡

WHENEVER I SEE A SAMURAI'S SWORD..
きゅうう
...I DON'T CARE IF I'LL NEVER USE IT, I JUST NEED TO HAVE ONE!
IF YOU'RE READY TO TALK PRICE..
...THIS IS AROUND FOUR RYO.
EXPEN-SIVE!
THAT'S QUITE AFFORDABLE!
REALLY?!
OH HO!
IT'S UNSIGNED, BUT THIS IS QUITE A BLADE.
IT HAS A FEW PECULIAR-ITIES...
...BUT ITS SHARP-NESS IS CERTIFIED.
HMM.
Doshi

I'LL NEVER HAVE ONE! I'VE LOST ALL HOPE!! DESPAIR! I--
ペチ
THAT'S HOW MUCH SWORDS COST?!
ハッ
WAIT A MINUTE.
Hmm
AND A WAKIZASHI SHOULD BE CHEAPER.
A KATANA IS TOO MUCH TO THINK ABOUT ANYWAY.
IF IT'S AFFORDABLE, IT'S BETTER THAN BEING UNARMED.
すっ…

*Wakizashi: The short sword worn alongside the katana



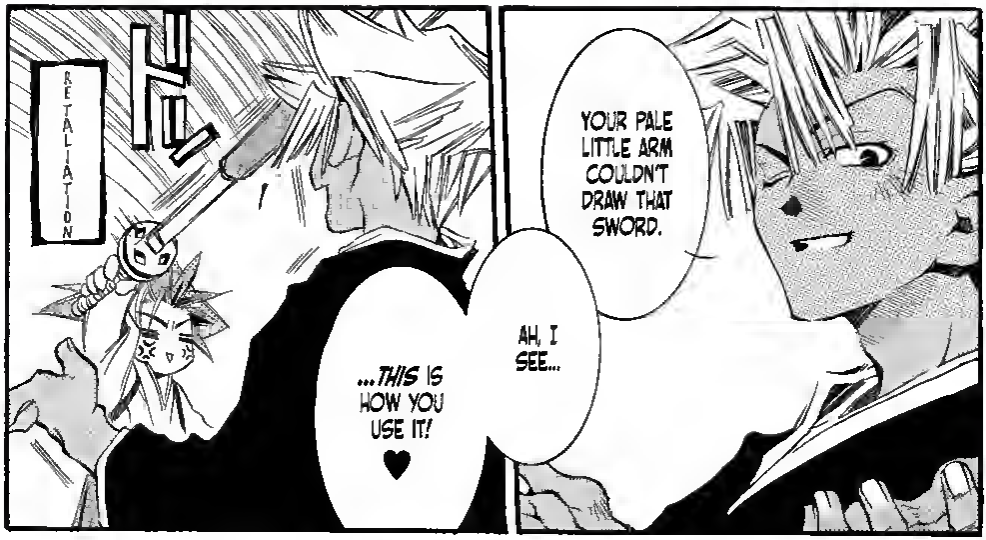
あぁ
WHAT?
YOU'RE THE SAME...
キラ…
STRANGE...
YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED IN THE FULL KATANA? JUST THE WAKIZASHI?
IS THAT SO WRONG?
NOT REALLY.
Hmh!
GRR...
……

LET GO!
YOU LET GO!
DON'T MESS AROUND, KID.
IT'D BE WASTED ON SOMEONE LIKE YOU.
GRRR!!
チィッ

IF YOU'RE GOING TO BRAG--
--THIS MUST BE QUITE A PIECE!
WHAT'YA THINK YOU'RE DOIN' BRAT?!
SHOW IT TO ME!
.....
Ow ow ow!!
Get your filthy hands off it!
HNH
HNH
HNH
HNH

Hmph!
"YOU CAN'T DO THAT, SUZU. YOU CAN'T GET DISTRACTED BY CHILDREN."
"A WARRIOR KEEPS HIS COMPOSURE AT ALL TIMES."
YES, SENSEI.
NOD NOD
WHO ARE YOU IMITATING?
IF YOU WANT TO SEE IT, LOOK.
AFTER ALL...
...IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU COULD WIELD.

Bastard.
HUH?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
HA!
HO!
Ha!
WHAT THE HELL?
I TOLD YOU.


RETALIATION
YOUR PALE LITTLE ARM COULDN'T DRAW THAT SWORD.
AH, I SEE...
...THIS IS HOW YOU USE IT!

AHEM.
WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A TRANSACTION.

YOU'RE IN THE WAY, YOUNG ONES.
GET OUT OF THE WAY, YOUNG ONE!
WHY DON'T YOU GET OUTTA THE WAY, YOUNG ONE?!
.....
I-I'M VERY SORRY.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS IMMEDIATELY.

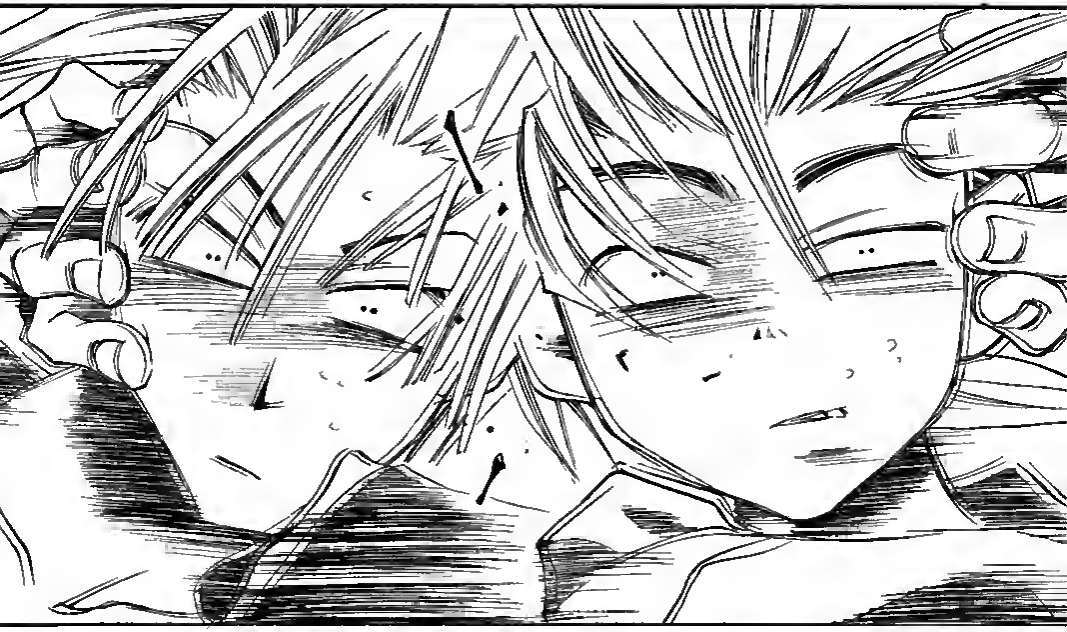
STEP ASIDE, RUNTS!
WHO...
WHO CALLED--

すぅぅ
HEY, OLD MAN.
IN THIS WORLD...
カチン!
click

...THERE'S A RIGHT WAY AND A WRONG WAY TO SAY SOMETHING.
ヒョォォォォォォ...
THAT KATANA...
IT WAS SO DIFFICULT TO USE, BUT...
HE DREW AND ATTACKED IN ONE MOTION.
...HE WIELDED IT LIKE IT WAS EASY!
Gulp!
THIS GUY...
...IS UNBELIEVABLE!

NAKAYAMA-SAMA...
CRASH
ガッ
ッシャァアン
...HAS ITS USES AND LIMITS, TOO, YOUNG MAN.
RUDE-NESS...

REPENT WHERE YOU STAND...
OR I WILL USE YOU TO TEST THE EDGE OF THIS BLADE.
YEAH. GOOD LUCK WITH IT, GUY. GOTTA GO.
I'VE LET MY TEMPER DEFEAT ME.
STUPID, STUPID, STUPID, STUPID. I'M SO STUPID!
WHAT DO I DO?
With children?
A Fight?
...TO STAND OUT IN KYOTO, I'LL BE A HINDRANCE TO SENSEI.
IF I DO ANYTHING...
GONG



PLEASE...

I HUMBLY ASK YOU TO FORGIVE THEM!!

I'VE TOLD THEM TIME AND AGAIN ON OUR TRAVELS, BUT THESE CHILDREN HAVE YET TO UNDERSTAND THE TENETS OF COMMON SENSE AND RESTRAINT. I SPEAK ONLY THE TRUTH, AND I AM TO BLAME FOR HAVING OVERLOOKED THESE RECKLESS, CHILDISH ACTS IN THE PAST YES, MY NEGLIGENCE BEGAT THIS SIN! THE BURDEN OF BLAME RESTS SQUARELY ON MY WEAKENED SHOULDERS!! TAKING THE HEADS OF THESE TWO CHILDREN WILL ONLY SULLY YOUR BLADE, FOR THEY ARE THE AGENTS OF MISCHIEF, NOT ITS AUTHOR! WILL YOU NOT TAKE MY HEAD IN PLACE OF THEIRS, SIR? WILL YOU NOT?!
What?
Eh! N-
EVEN THOUGH THESE WILLFUL MISCREANTS ARE BUT CHILDREN, THE RECKLESS ACTION OF HAVING CUT THE SLEEVE OF YOUR FINE GARMENT MUST NOT BE FORGIVEN. EVEN IF, IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS QUARREL STARTED BY MERE CHILDREN, ONE MEEK CITIZEN SUCH AS MYSELF STEPS IN AND BOWS, FOREHEAD SCRAPING DIRT, I KNOW VERY WELL THAT YOUR ANGER WILL NOT--MUST NOT!--BE COOLED BUT KNOW THAT WE ARE BROTHERS WHO HAVE ONLY JUST YESTERDAY ARRIVED IN THE CAPITAL. KNOWING NONE OF ITS MANNERS NOR CUSTOMS. WE ARE SIMPLE COUNTRY FOLK, NOT KNOWING RIGHT FROM WRONG. WE DON'T EVEN KNOW RIGHT FROM LEFT! SIMPLE CHILDREN... NO, WE ARE BUT THREE MERE INFANTS!!

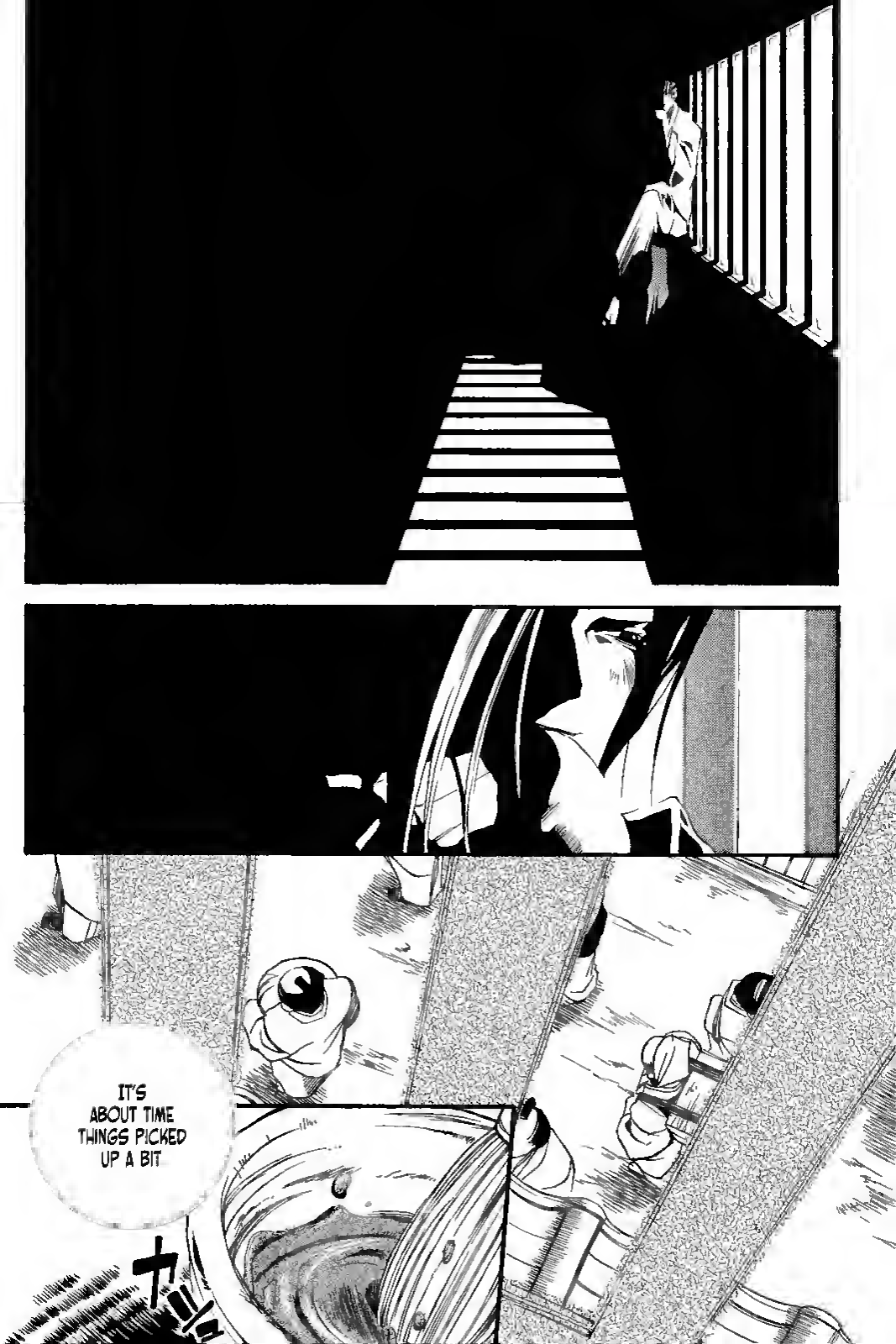
THAT HURTS, TATSU!
?!
?!
SWEATIN' IT
Yarning Eyes
IT'S NOT THAT! NO! I DON'T WANT TO--
FOR SIR MY BODY IS IN THE THROES OF A LOSING BATTLE WITH A DEMON, AND THIS DEMON HAS BROUGHT ILL HEALTH UPON ME. IN TRUTH, GOOD SIR, I HAVEN'T MANY DAYS LEFT ON THIS FAIR EARTH. COUGH! THE HOLE THIS DEMON OF ILLNESS HAS TORN OPEN IN MY STOMACH WILL CONTINUE TO WIDEN, EMPTYING POISON INTO MY BODY CONSUMING MY HEART IN ITS VIGOR. COUGH! COUGH! IF I DIE, MY BROTHERS WILL BE CAST OUT INTO THE CRUEL CITY AND THE CRUELER WORLD WITH NO SUPPORT, NO MONEY AND NO LOVE. BUT SINCE I MUST PART FROM THEM WITHAL, I ASK YOU TO FINISH MY USELESS LIFE RIGHT HERE, TO TAKE MY HEAD IN PLACE OF THEIRS. THEY SHALL SURVIVE WITHOUT ME. SOMEHOW NOW, SIR! BEFORE YOUR ANGER HAS COOLED! NOW! CUT ME DOWN WITHOUT HESITATION!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE SAYING?!
Should I call for an official?
Those poor children!
What a mean old samurai!

.....
Shut up!
NO WAY! IT WAS HIM, NOT ME, BIG BROTHER!
SHUT UP AND APOLOGIZE! YOU DID SOMETHING WRONG, DIDN'T YOU?
I'm not in the wrong here, am I?
YOU SHOW UP OUTTA NOWHERE AND NOW WE'RE PROSTRATING OURSELVES!
Please calm yourself
Ugh! You're heavy!
I DON'T HAVE TO! YOU DID SOMETHING TO THAT GUY!
Apologize!
Why were you fighting like that?
LISTEN TO ME, TATSU!

EXCUSE ME. I'M VERY SORRY YOU GOT CAUGHT UP IN ALL THIS.
NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE. THIS GUY--
H-HEY! WHERE'RE YOU GOING?!
THIS IS YOUR MESS, ISN'T IT?!
DAMN YOU, YOU...
...STUPID WHITE-HAIRED CAT!!

WHAT IS WITH...
...THAT GUY?

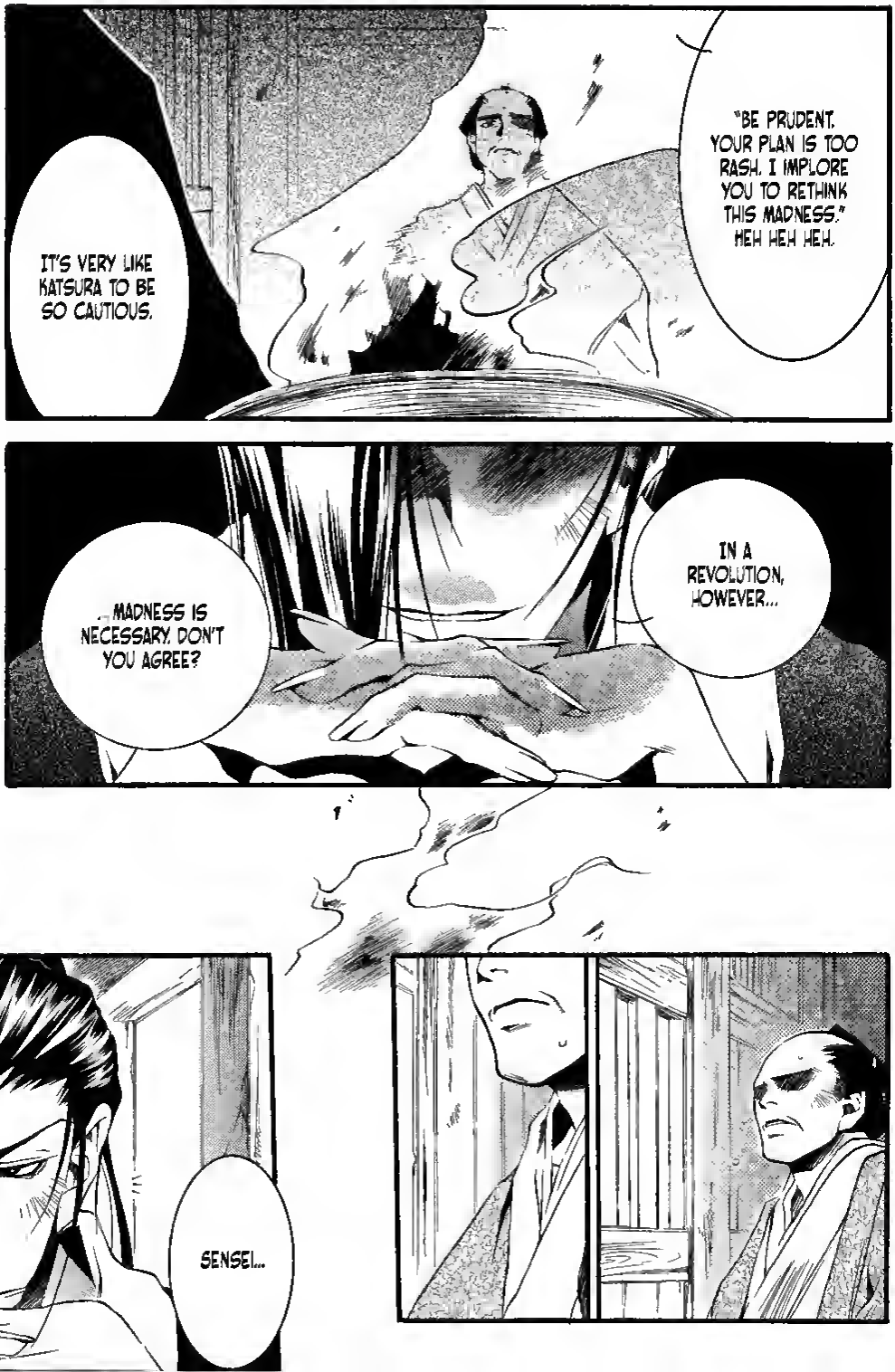
Act.13
I Call Your Name

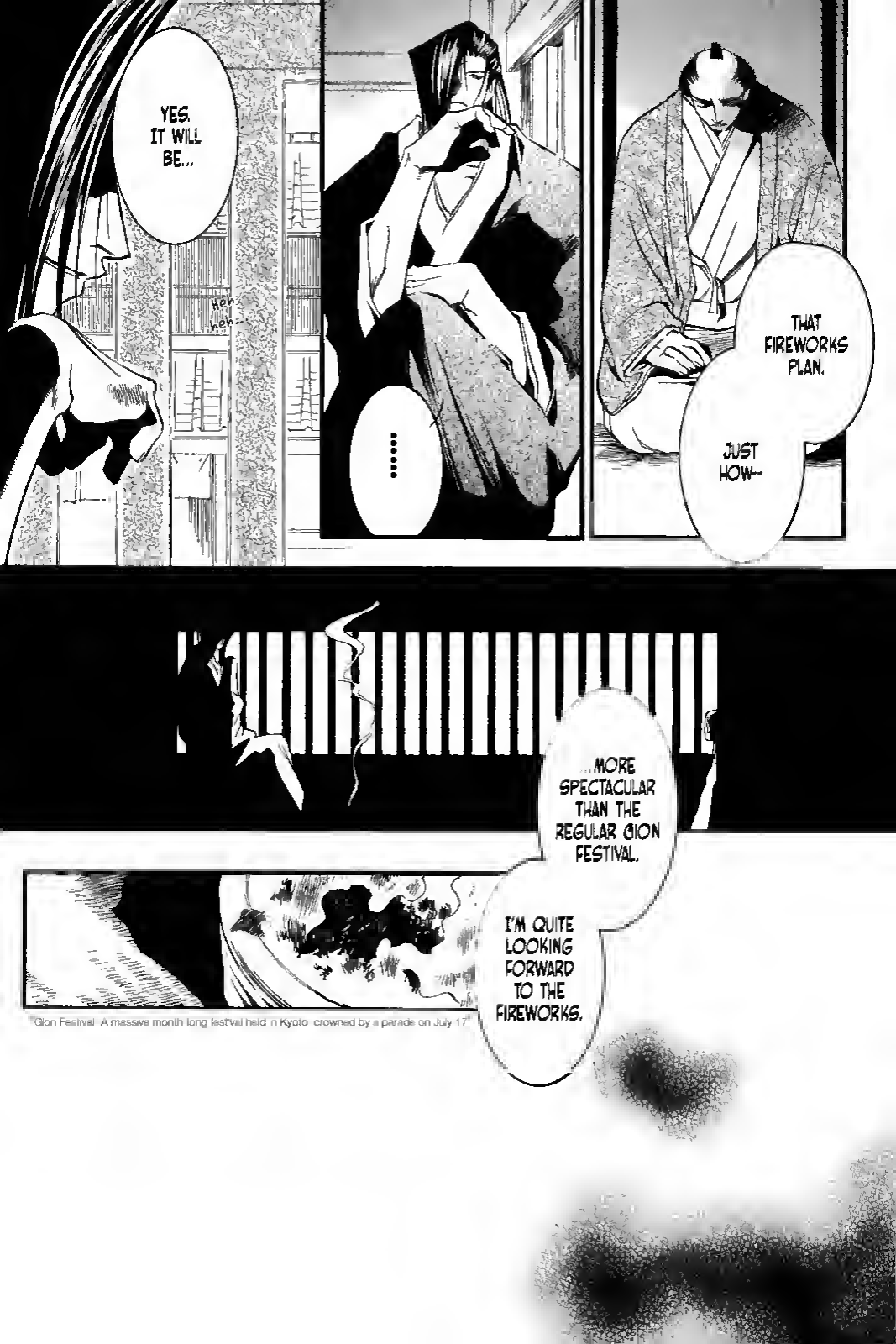

IT'S ABOUT TIME THINGS PICKED UP A BIT
ガシャ

THE PEOPLE OF THE CAPITAL CERTAINLY LOVE THEIR FESTIVALS.
Heh heh...
YOIYAMA ALREADY? LET THEM CELEBRATE GRANDLY THEN...
.....
ポウ
...FOR IT WILL BE THEIR LAST HOLIDAY.

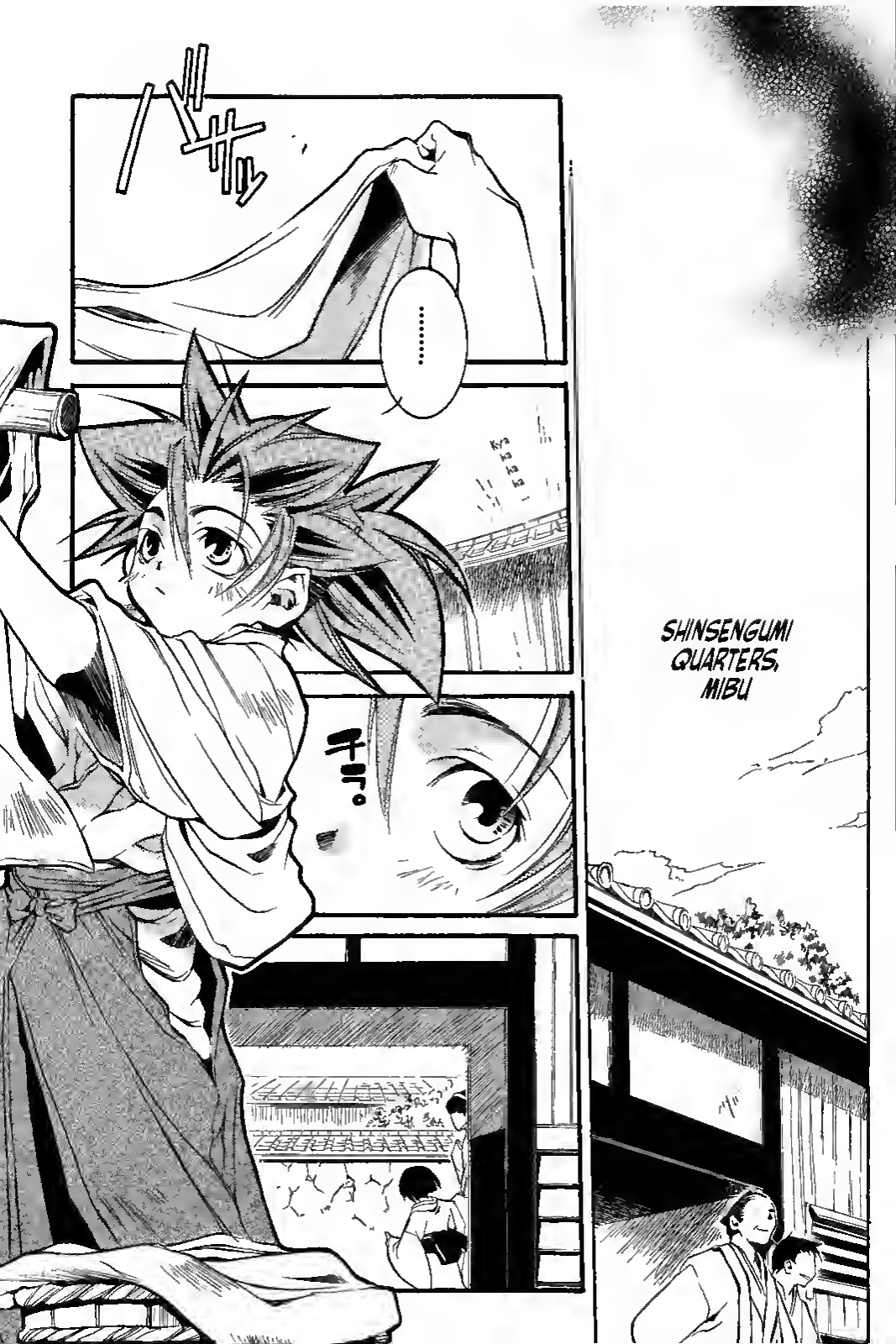
"Yoiyama" July 16th a party the night before the Gion festival

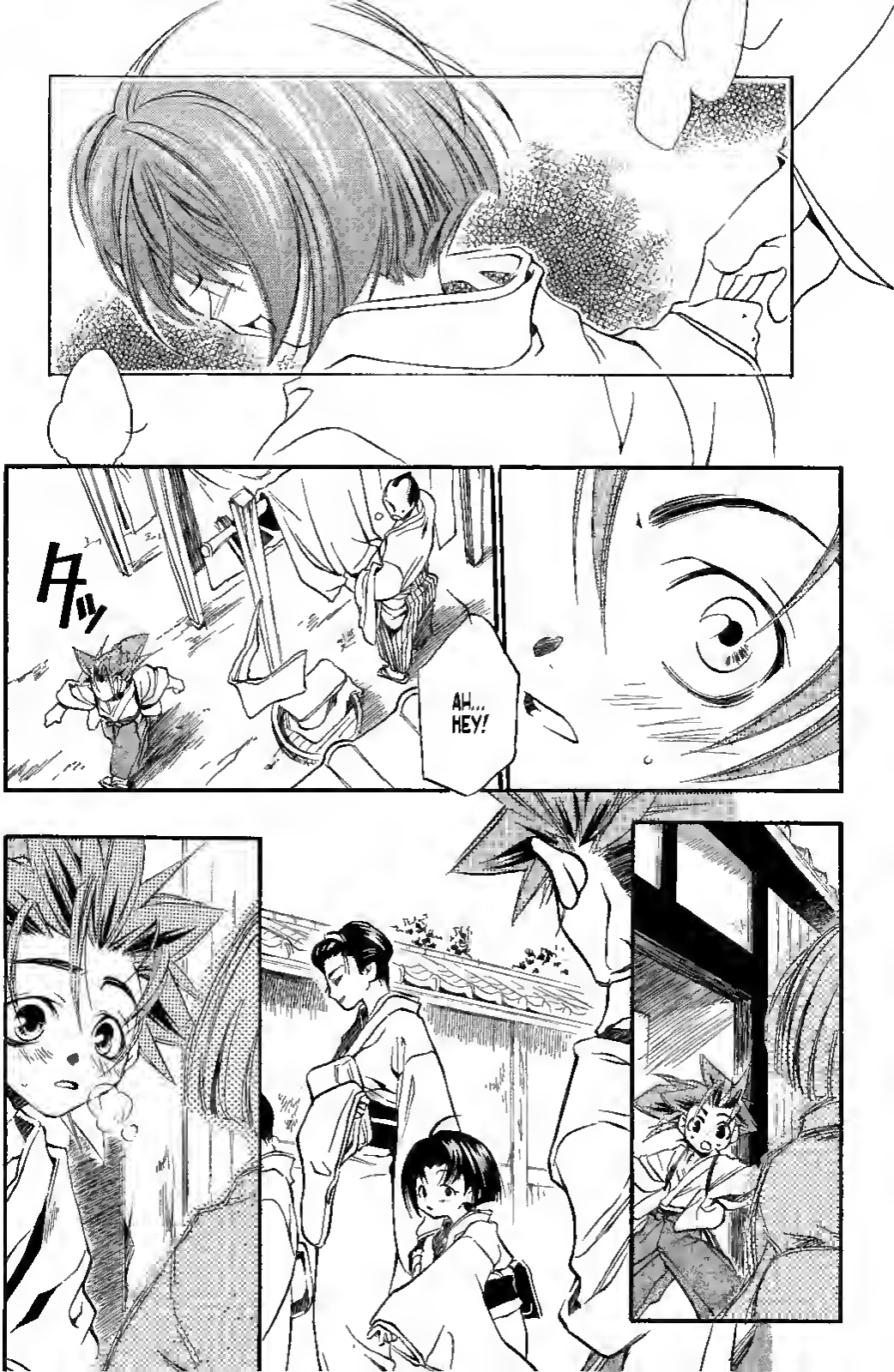
SENSEI! THAT LETTER...
YES.
IT'S A LETTER FROM THAT COWARD KATSURA.
Heh heh...
YES. THIS TIME HE'S SAYING ALL SORTS OF RIDICULOUS THINGS.
トス…
WH--
WHAT...?

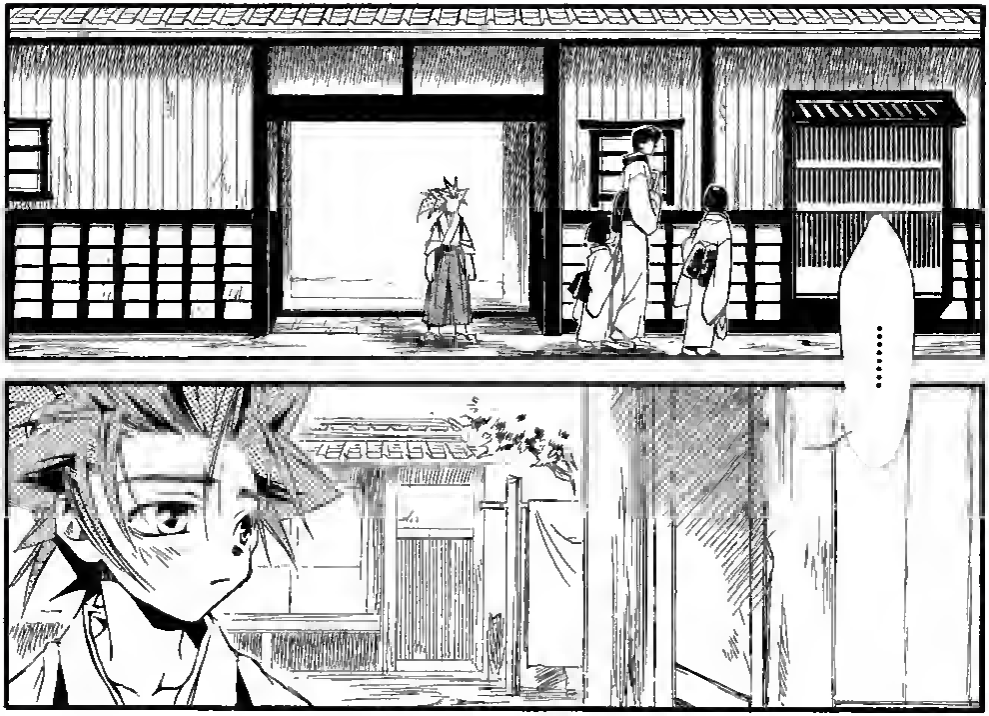

"BE PRUDENT. YOUR PLAN IS TOO RASH. I IMPLORE YOU TO RETHINK THIS MADNESS." HEH HEH HEH.
IT'S VERY LIKE KATSURA TO BE SO CAUTIOUS.
IN A REVOLUTION, HOWEVER...
...MADNESS IS NECESSARY. DON'T YOU AGREE?
SENSEI...


YES. IT WILL BE...
Heh heh--
THAT FIREWORKS PLAN.
JUST HOW--
...MORE SPECTACULAR THAN THE REGULAR GION FESTIVAL.
I'M QUITE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FIREWORKS.

"Gion Festival: A massive month long festival held in Kyoto, crowned by a parade on July 17."


……
チラ。
SHINSENGUMI
QUARTERS,
MIBU


AH... HEY!

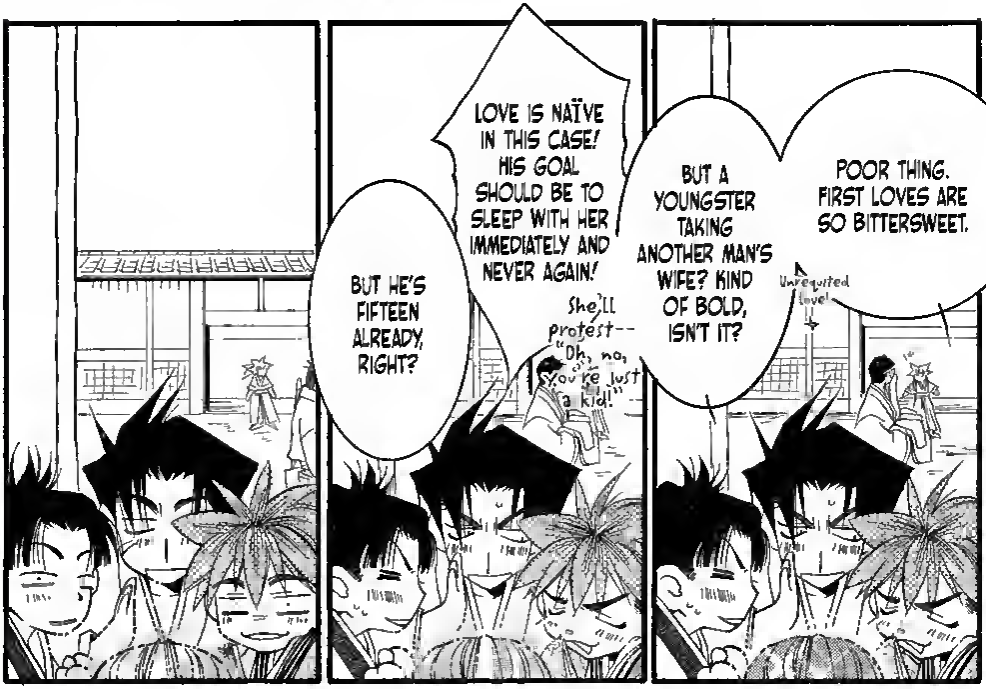

.....

DID YOU SEE THAT, MADAM?
OHH YES. THAT PAINED EXPRESSION ON HIS LITTLE FACE IS DEFINITELY THE SIGN OF A CRUSH. WHICH MEANS ..
AGE FIFTEEN. FINALLY GETTING THE MALE INSTINCT.
THAT TETSUNOSUKE OF THE ICHIMURAS WAS LOOKING AT A GIRL. WELL, WELL.
dear me!

...SPRING HAS COME AT LAST! ♥
(We've found ourselves a new game!) ♥
WHAT THEY SEE
REALITY
IT'D BE EASIER IF HE FELL FOR THE DAUGHTER.
THAT'S JUST TOO CRUEL! A MARRIED FIRST LOVE!
HANG ON! THAT WOMAN HAD A LITTLE GIRL WITH HER! SHE MUST BE MARRIED!
.....
WHY WAS SHE CRYING?
...I HAVEN'T SEEN HER ONCE SINCE THAT DAY.
AFTER ALL THAT...
SAYA.

WE COULD'VE BEEN FRIENDS.
しゅん…
then shove him into her house, right?
So we get the brat close to her...
No, no! We've got to tickle her maternal instinct!

ALL I KNOW ABOUT HER IS HER NAME.
WHY DIDN'T I ASK WHERE SHE LIVED? AT LEAST THEN WE COULD'VE...


BUT HE'S FIFTEEN ALREADY, RIGHT?
LOVE IS NAÏVE IN THIS CASE! HIS GOAL SHOULD BE TO SLEEP WITH HER IMMEDIATELY AND NEVER AGAIN!
She'll protest-- "Oh, no, you're just a kid!"
BUT A YOUNGSTER TAKING ANOTHER MAN'S WIFE? KIND OF BOLD, ISN'T IT?
POOR THING. FIRST LOVES ARE SO BITTERSWEET.
Unrequited love!

Hello!
YAMA-NAMI-SAN.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING AROUND HERE?
IS HE BORED OR SOME-THING?
OH! I GET IT!
YOU'RE BORED! RIGHT? ♡
HA HA. THAT'S RIGHT.
Right?
I THINK I KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE.
SO WHY DON'T YOU BOYS...
...JUST LEAVE THIS TO ME?
CLEAN

AH.
YAMA-NAMI-SAN!
HI! WHAT'S GOING ON?
NOT AS ENERGETIC AS USUAL?
Leading question
HUH?
NO. WHY, DO I LOOK DOWN?
YOU SHOULDN'T OVERDO IT.
WORK IS ONLY WORK, AFTER ALL.

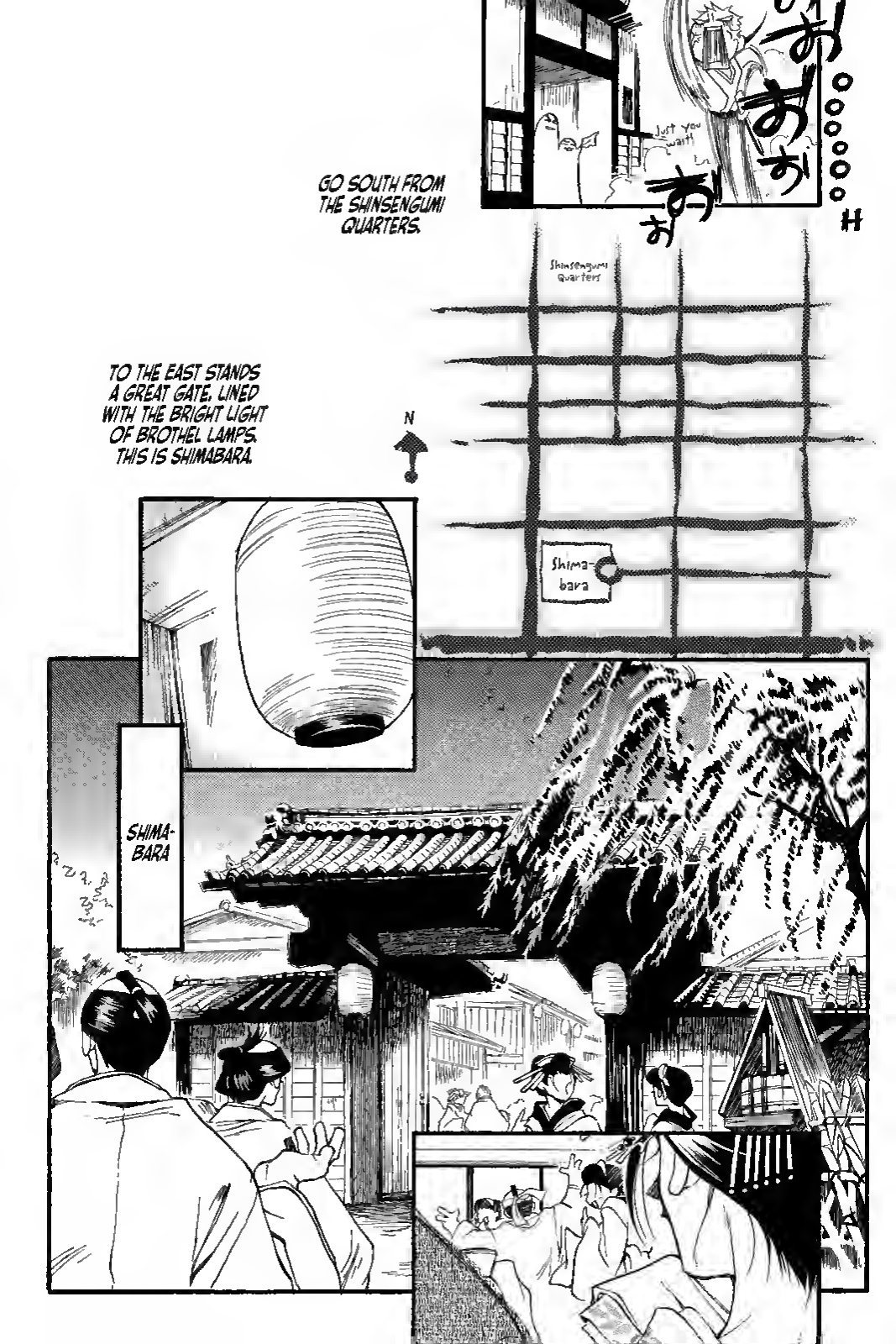
BEING HIJIKATA-KUN'S PAGE MUST BE ONE OF THE TOUGHEST JOBS HERE.
YEAH. BEING A PAGE HAS BEEN SOOO MUCH WORK.
IN ANY CASE, I THINK YOU...
...NEED SOME RECREATION.
NOT THAT!
HEY WAIT!
"RECREATION"?

*Shimabara: The pleasure district of Kyoto

BWA HA HA HA HA
My stomach hurts!
WHAT A KID!
HE'S EVEN GOT AN EXCUSE! "THE ONLY BREASTS I WANT ARE STILL ATTACHED TO MY MOTHER!"
YOU SAID IT! NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE HE'S FIFTEEN IF HE SHOWED UP ON HIS OWN!
THEY'LL BE REAL FINE!
Gya ha ha!
?
AS IN...THE RED-LIGHT DISTRICT?
ボソ...
SHIMA-BARA...
AH! I WANT TO SEE IT!
.....
AS IN... PROSTI-TUTES?
AS IN... GEISHA HOUSES?
YUP.
IT'S MY FIRST TIME, SO...
Hee hee!
IT'S OKAY IF YOU'RE NERVOUS!
PROSTITUTES-- MEANING...

I'LL BE SURE TO TEACH YOU EVERYTHING!
PAUSE
I'M GOING...
...TO SHIMABARA.
NAGAKURA-SAN. HARADA-SAN, YOU'VE TREATED ME WITH RESPECT. FOR THAT, I THANK YOU.

I NEVER TAUGHT HIM...
...TO GIVE HIS PURITY AWAY TO SOME FILTHY SUCCUBUS!
GAAA WAAA
FOR 13 YEARS, MY LATE FATHER AND MOTHER TAUGHT HIM THAT LIFE WAS FULL OF BUTTERFLIES AND FLOWERS.
AREN'T YOU THE FLOWERS AND BUTTERFLIES BOY?
THOSE LAST TWO YEARS MUST'VE BEEN EMOTIONAL.
AND PATHETIC! HOW COULD YOU DO THAT TO HIM? HE'S A BOY!
Rapid Succession of Jabs
FOR TWO MORE YEARS, I TAUGHT HIM TO BE HEALTHY AND CHASTE.
JUST WAIT, SHIMABARA!
EH, EXCITING EITHER WAY.
HE'S NOT GOING THERE TO DO SOMEONE. HE'S GOING THERE TO DO SOMEONE IN!
YUP, YOU TOO?
TELL ME YOU SAW THIS COMING.
Wonder what he'll do
I didn't even tell him which house!


Just you wait!
おおおo
Go south from the Shinsengumi quarters.
Shinsengumi Quarters
Shima-bara
To the east stands a great gate, lined with the bright light of brothel lamps. This is Shimabara.
N
Shima-bara
!!!!!

*-han The Kansai area version of the honorific -"san"

CHISA! BRING SOME SNACKS, PLEASE!
I WANT TO TOUCH HIS HAIR, TOO!
SAKE IS NO GOOD, HUH? WHAT ABOUT SOME AMAZAKE? WILL YOU DRINK THAT?
YEAH...

[1]Amazake: A sweet, low alcohol traditional beverage. Think white, milky champagne

YES.
Ha ha ha...
IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEONE TO DRINK WITH.
AND AGAIN!
HA HA. THAT'S ALWAYS THE WAY.
THE CUTE ONES ARE ALWAYS POPULAR, AREN'T THEY, YAMANAMI-SAN?
He's already lost all the women.

I'VE NEVER DONE THIS BEFORE. I DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT GIRLS.
AND, THEN, AND, THEN...
...ALL OF A SUDDEN?
HOW DID I END UP HERE...
AWW. WHAT'S WRONG?
IT'S ALL RIGHT IF YOU'RE NERVOUS!
...IT'S SCARY. I'M SCARED.
AH!

すー
HUH?
...IT SEEMS THEY'VE COME.
?
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE.

I AM AKESATO.
AKESATO
YAMANAMI-HAN, TOUDOU-HAN.
I HOPE YOU HAVE AN ENJOYABLE EVENING.
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL AS ALWAYS, AKESATO.
OH--I'M SORRY, AKESATO-SAN....

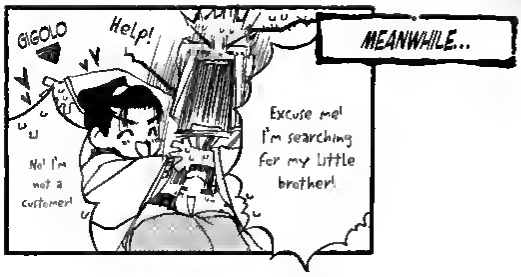
Here, here
YES?
...WE'VE BROUGHT ALONG ONE EXTRA TO IMPOSE UPON YOUR HOSPITALITY.
YOU SEE THAT LITTLE TROUBLED PUPPY JUST OVER THERE?
OH! ♡
HE'S ADORABLE! IS HE A SOLDIER?
WELL, HOW CAN I PUT THIS...?
?

?
WHAT'S HAPPENED? ARE YOU FEELING ILL?
IS SOMETHING WRONG, SAYA?
AAH?
!

KYA!
WHERE IS SHE GOING? EXCUSE ME!
SAYA?!
!
!!

HEY!
WAIT!
GRAB
Huff...
Huff...

WHY...
...DID YOU RUN?
SAYA.
.....


GIGOLO
Help!
No! I'm not a customer!
MEANWHILE...
Excuse me! I'm searching for my little brother!

Act.14
Something

……

……
I'M SORRY.

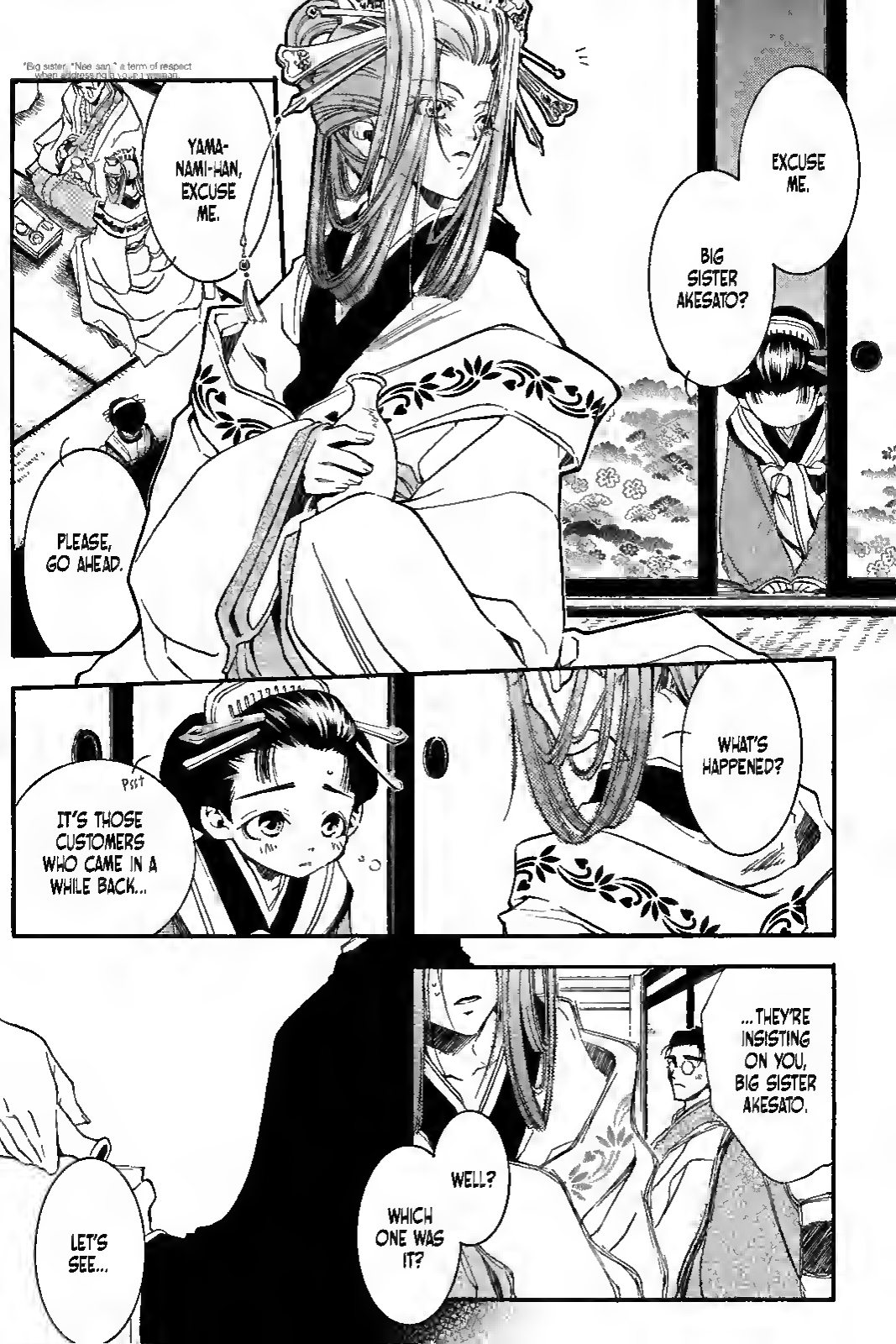
I'M SORRY, SAYA.
WHEN I TALKED TO YOU BEFORE...
...I THINK I SAID SOMETHING THAT UPSET YOU.

ALL THIS TIME, NOT SEEING YOU...IT'S BEEN DIFFICULT FOR ME.
I'D NEVER THINK OF MEETING YOU IN...THIS KIND OF PLACE.
.....
BUT NOW THAT I SEE YOU I CAN SAY IT.

BE MY FRIEND.
WILL YOU...
...BE MY FRIEND?

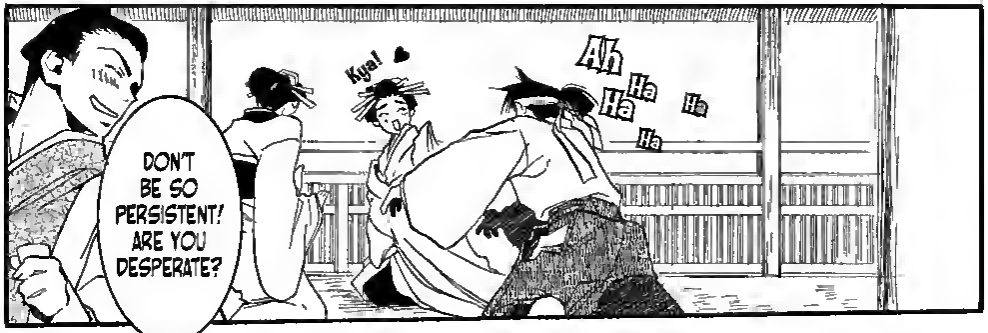
.....
Sniff!
WHAT A KID.
WELL, THEN.

THERE'S NO BED IN THERE. JUST BUILDING BLOCKS AND PLAYING CARDS.
Oh my!
NOT LISTENING
OH, DON'T MAKE FUN OF THEM!
SHE MIGHT BE TETSU-KUN'S FUTURE LOVER!
No way!
Oh my!
Eh?
I COULDN'T LEAVE THEM STANDING THERE...
...SO I SET THEM UP IN A SEPARATE ROOM FOR SOME ALONE TIME.
Ha Ha Ha
Ho Ho Ho
OH, COME NOW, YAMA-NAMI-HAN. ♡
WELL. I'LL HAVE TO WORK MUCH HARDER FOR YOU, THEN.
PERHAPS WE SHOULD GET A SEPARATE ROOM, TOO.
OH, DOES IT?
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? A GIRL'S HEART HOLDS MANY DEEP SECRETS, EVEN BEFORE SHE BECOMES A WOMAN.
IT MAY BE SO BEFORE TOO LONG.
With those two.
Ha ha ha ha...


*Big sister. *Nee san." a term of respect when addressing a older woman.
YAMA-NAMI-HAN, EXCUSE ME.
EXCUSE ME.
BIG SISTER AKESATO?
PLEASE, GO AHEAD.
WHAT'S HAPPENED?
PSST
IT'S THOSE CUSTOMERS WHO CAME IN A WHILE BACK...
...THEY'RE INSISTING ON YOU, BIG SISTER AKESATO.
WELL? WHICH ONE WAS IT?
LET'S SEE...

HE'S YOUNG, WEARING BLACK CLOTHING.
.....
!
IS HE AN UNWANTED CUSTOMER?
HE IS, COMPARED TO YAMANAMI-HAN.
Heh heh...
BUT BY THOSE STANDARDS, EVERYONE ELSE IS UNWANTED. ♡

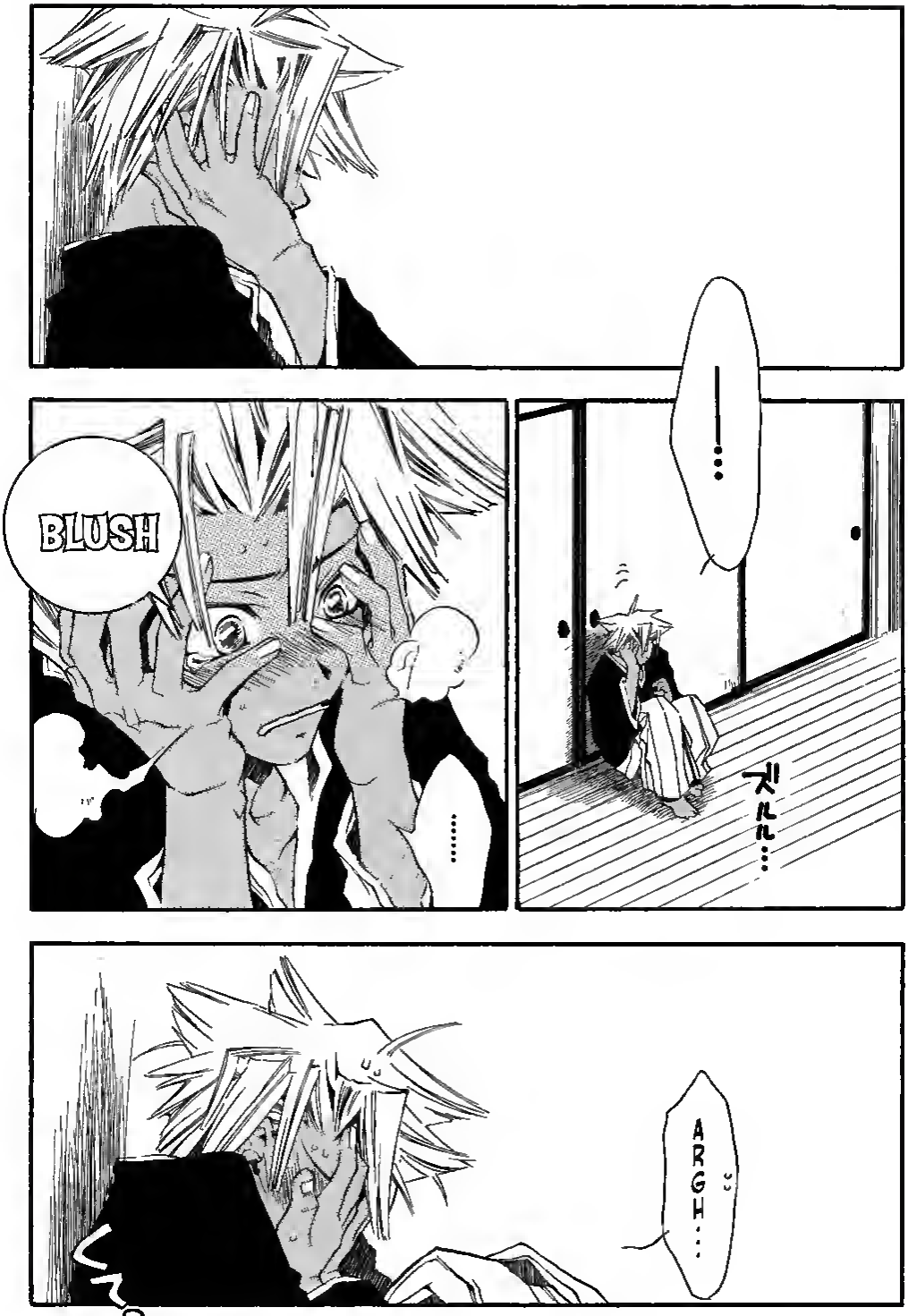
I'M SORRY.
BUT TELL HIM THAT TONIGHT I MUST REFUSE.


Kya!
Ah Ha Ha Ha Ha
DON'T BE SO PERSISTENT! ARE YOU DESPERATE?

I'LL SAY IT AGAIN. I WILL SEE ONLY AKESATO SAN.
I'M SORRY. SHE'S ENGAGED THIS EVENING.
HEY HEY KITAMURA!
Heh heh heh...
ALREADY PICKY ON YOUR FIRST TIME?

A WOMAN'S A WOMAN.
WHERE'S THE FUN IN BEING FAITHFUL?
Twee!
AH!
I'VE CAUGHT YOU!
HEH HEH HEH
ALL RIGHT! NOW YOU'RE IT!
Kya!
SQUEEZE
I'LL JUST WAIT, THEN.
WAH WAH...
WHY SO GLUM? IS IT SO BAD TO BE STUCK HERE?

I'M HERE ON BUSINESS.
NOT TO GET DRUNK AND CHASE TAIL.
HEH.
?
STAT
WHAT A LITTLE BITCH!
Heh heh.
HE'S YOSHIDA-SENSEI'S "FAVORITE."
WHAT WAS THAT?
wa ha ha ha...


BLUSH
……
……!
ズルル…
ARGH…

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH ME LATELY?
I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO GO BUY PROSTITUTES!
カチャッ…
……
カチャ

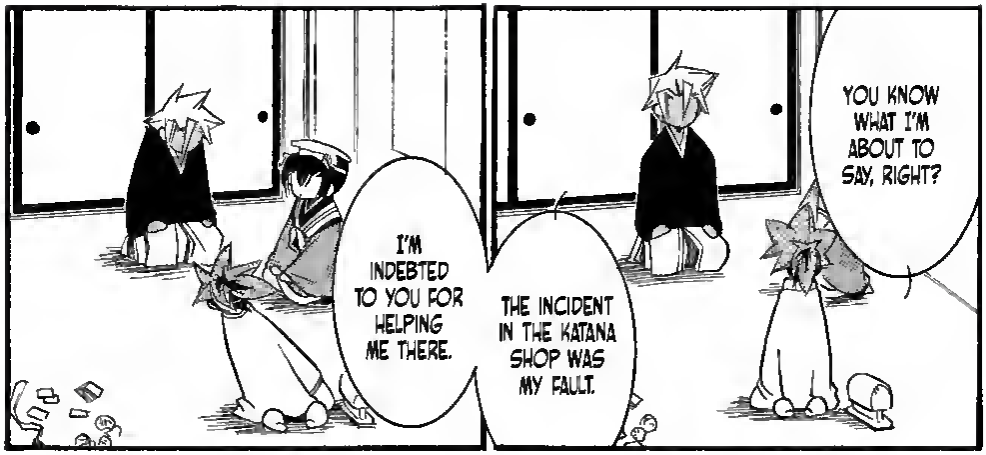
AH HA HA HA
Where are You?!
DAMMIT!
IF IT'S NOT ONE ANNOYANCE, IT'S ANOTHER.
SOUNDS LIKE A DRUNK MOLESTING A KID!
Tch!
GOTCHA!

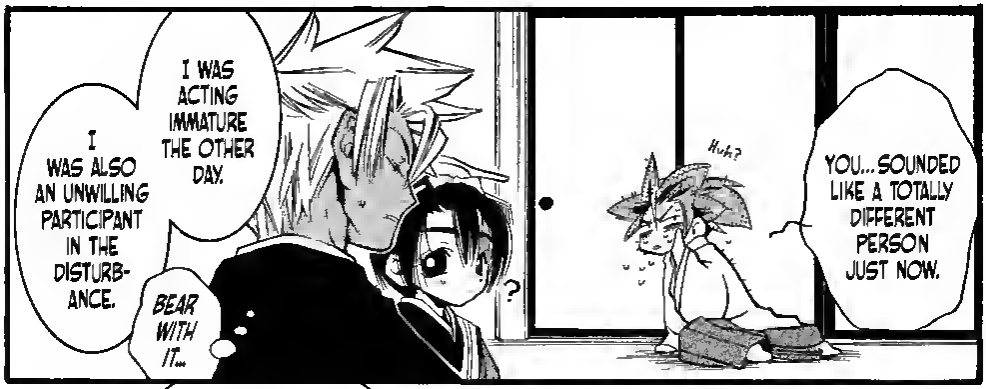
WHA?
BANG

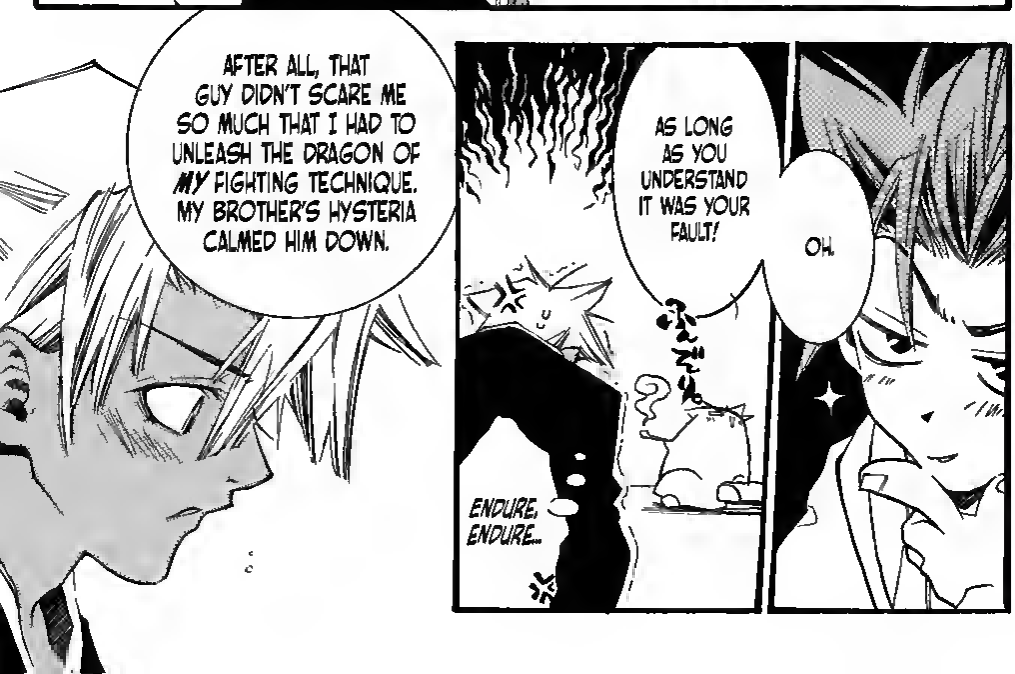
OW!

モ
ゴ。
!!
'A'A 'OU!?!
WHAT WAS THAT SOUND?
Ah'o'aa'a'o!
NGWAH!
WE'D BETTER HIDE!
OW! I TRIPPED!
Ah ha ha!
ひょこっ

IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT IN THERE?
I'M NOT HURT! NOTHING'S BROKEN! I'M TOUGH! I'M FINE!
.....
.....


I'M INDEBTED TO YOU FOR HELPING ME THERE.
THE INCIDENT IN THE KATANA SHOP WAS MY FAULT.
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M ABOUT TO SAY, RIGHT?


I WAS ACTING IMMATURE THE OTHER DAY.
I WAS ALSO AN UNWILLING PARTICIPANT IN THE DISTURB-ANCE.
BEAR WITH IT...
?
Huh?
YOU... SOUNDED LIKE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON JUST NOW.


AFTER ALL, THAT GUY DIDN'T SCARE ME SO MUCH THAT I HAD TO UNLEASH THE DRAGON OF MY FIGHTING TECHNIQUE. MY BROTHER'S HYSTERIA CALMED HIM DOWN.
AS LONG AS YOU UNDERSTAND IT WAS YOUR FAULT!
OH.
ENDURE, ENDURE...

I'LL GO AHEAD AND TELL HIM YOU SAID THANKS, BY THE WAY.
Hmph.
BLEH, I'M BORED.
At least answer me!
ANYWAY...
...WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? BY YOURSELF?
HIT A SORE SPOT.
GULP!
Hmm?
OH, I'M SOOORRY. IT MUST BE HARD TO SAY.
DID ONE OF THEM REJECT YOU?
Well...?
WHAT ABOUT YOU?

RUNNING AROUND A BROTHEL WITH A LITTLE GIRL, PLAYING LIKE KIDS?
YOU SCARED OF THE BIG LADIES? HUH?
Urgh!
Hmph!
BRAT.
Keh!
WHAT?!
PFFT!
.....
.....
Hnh hnh hnh... PFFT!

?
I'M GOING BACK.
THANKS FOR THE DISTRACTION.
にんまぁ〜〜っ
.....
WHY DON'T YOU PLAY FOR A BIT?
♡

ARE YOU KIDDING ME?
BLIND-FOLDED TAG.
I'm it
WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU TWO PLAYING?

ARE YOU...
...SOME SORT OF MASTER AT SUCKING AT CARDS?
GAH!
SHUT UP!!
IT'S BEEN A REALLY LONG TIME SINCE I PLAYED CARDS.
ALL THAT RUNNING AROUND MADE ME THIRSTY.
So hot...
.....?
.....
ぬぬぬ...

.....
YOU...
I ALMOST DID IT WITHOUT THINKING.
...ACT LIKE YOU'RE SOMEBODY'S PAGE.
SO IT SHOWS, HUH?
EH?!
YOU'RE KIDDING! YOU'RE A PAGE, TOO?!
HUH?!
SOMEONE LIKE YOU MUST WORK FOR A KINDLY, SENILE OLD MAN.
WRONG!
HEAR AND BE AMAZED! WHEN IT COMES TO GREAT MEN, I SERVE THE GREATEST!
HE IS KNOWN THROUGHOUT KYO! I AM THE GREAT--

Who is it?
Ehh?
...SOMEBODY'S PAGE!
THAT WAS CLOSE!
Damn!
YOU WERE ABOUT TO SAY IT!
I don't get it
AH, I WON'T FORCE IT OUT OF YOU.
Ah ha ha...
I WORK FOR SOMEONE WHOSE STATUS AND NAME REQUIRE SECRECY, TOO.
THAT SOUNDS A LITTLE SUSPICIOUS!
NO MORE THAN YOURS.
...IS YOUR NAME SECRET, TOO?
.....
SO, THEN...

...KITAMURA SUZU.
I'M ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE.
HMM.
SOMEHOW...
AT LEAST I'M NOT THAT DISAGREEABLE!
AT LEAST I'M NOT THAT MUCH OF A BRAT!

...THEY'RE EXACTLY ALIKE.

SCUFF

Act.15
Chains

SO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF MAN SENSEI IS?
SURE.
YOU CAN GLOSS OVER HIS APPEARANCE AND PERSONALITY.
Sensei?
MAYBE HIS BOSS...
...IS LIKE THE DEMON VICE CAPTAIN! HA!
LET'S SEE...
Now that'd be interesting.
HUH?

HE'S GOT SHARP EYES IN A HANDSOME FACE.
SHARP EYES?!
AND GLOSSY BLACK HAIR THAT PLAYS SLEEKLY IN THE WIND.
GLOSSY HAIR?!
HE HAS A STRONG, WELL-BALANCED BODY, WHICH HE WRAPS IN JET BLACK CLOTHING.
BLACK CLOTHING ?!
THEY'RE THE SAME!!
EVEN WOMEN WHO REFUSE ALL OTHERS EVENTUALLY SUCCUMB TO HIS SIDELONG GLANCE, THINKING THEY'VE RECEIVED AN INVITATION HE NEVER ACTUALLY CARED TO GIVE.
BUT...
...GREAT DIFFERENCE.
...THERE'S ONE...

SUZU, YOU...
...REALLY LIKE THAT MAN, DON'T YOU?
COULD YOU SERVE SOMEONE YOU HATED?
WELL, MINE NEVER GIVES ME REAL WORK.
"PAGES ARE..."
"...SAFE THEY ARE REQUIRED NEITHER TO KILL NOR TO DIE ON THE JOB."
I DON'T LIKE THAT PART OF HIM.
.....

THAT WAS SAID TO ME.
.....
I DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S TRUE FOR ME.
BUT THAT'S NICE...
...BEING TREASURED BY SOMEONE YOU ADMIRE.
NO WAY.
I HATE MY BOSS.

HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW I'M THERE.
I'M PROBABLY HATED MORE THAN ANY OTHER PAGE.
That's me
.....
HE IGNORES ME MOST OF THE TIME.
HE DOESN'T GET ANGRY IF I DON'T SERVE TEA, OR IF I DON'T SHOW UP AT ALL!
HE'S NOT THE TYPE WHO CARES ABOUT PEOPLE'S SAFETY ANYWAY.
I DON'T GET IT, REALLY.
THEN I'LL ASK YOU THIS:

BEYOND BEING A PAGE AND AN UNDERLING...
...YOU DON'T HAVE ANY CONNECTION TO HIM?
NONE. WHY?
PAGES AREN'T "EMPLOYED BY" THEIR BOSSES...
...THEY'RE "UNDER THEIR CARE."

NO, THAT'S FINE!
...HE CAN'T BE MORE THAN TWELVE OR THIRTEEN.
HE IS, BUT...
THEN HE'S HERE! NOW?!

HE'S REALLY FIFTEEN, BUT HE LOOKS YOUNGER.
PLEASE TAKE ME TO THAT ROOM.
IF YOU SAY HE'S *TETSUNOSUKE ICHIMURA*, THERE'S NO MISTAKE!

……
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z
Z...

EXCUSE ME.
HANA!
UM, BIG SISTER AKESATO?
PSST
PSST
YOU'VE COME AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME.
HANA, IT'S ABOUT THE CUSTOMER I REFUSED THIS EVENING...
EH...?
ZZZZZ...

IS HE STILL HERE?
THAT'S RIGHT!
WAS HE A BOY WITH WHITE HAIR WEARING BLACK?
IN A ROOM, WITH SAYA AND ANOTHER BOY.
IS THAT SO?
ASIDE FROM HIM...
...WAS THERE ALSO, ALL WRAPPED IN BLACK...
...A REAL LADY-KILLER, WITH HIS HAIR FALLING OVER HIS RIGHT EYE?

ALSO IN JET BLACK ...?
GRAB
"THE WOMAN WHO MUST EMBRACE AT WORK," HUH?
I CAME TO SEE WHAT KINDA WOMAN THAT WAS.
YOU SMELL SUSPICIOUS TO ME.
Huh?
AKESATO-SAN?

LOOKS LIKE YOUR WATCHDOG'S SLEEPING.
YOU HAVE TIME TO TALK TO US NOW.
WHA--?
I CANNOT ALLOW THAT.

YAMA-NAMI-HAN!
SHIT!
YOUR BOORISHNESS HAS DISTURBED MY PRECIOUS RELAXATION.
Please step back!
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE OR WHERE YOU'RE FROM, GUY...
...ARE YOU IN IT, TOO?
Hmm?
I'M NOT SURE TO WHAT YOU'RE REFERRING.

NO, I DON'T GET IT AT ALL. BUT...
...YOU DO SMELL PRETTY SUSPICIOUS.
.....!!

OH, NO, NO.
THIS IS NOT A PLACE TO DRAW KATANA.
チャ
WE CAN'T HAVE THAT, YOU HEAR?
OLD MAN!
YOU JUST SCREWED UP BIG!
ゴゴゴ

WE'VE COME ALL THIS WAY.
COULD YOU NOT RUIN HIS GOOD MOOD?
パチ…
パチ…
カキ…
……
A MAN IN BLACK, HMM?
THAT AUGURS EVIL.

I'M ABOUT TO LOSE MY CALM DEMEANOR, GENTLEMEN.
.....
WHO PICKS A FIGHT HERE, FOR NO REASON?
Extremists?
WHAT IN THE WORLD WAS THAT?

NOW, THEN.
ごろん。
!

ZZZ…
ZZZ…

.....
Uuuuuuuuuuuu
Uuuuuuuuuuuu
HICCUP!
SNIFF

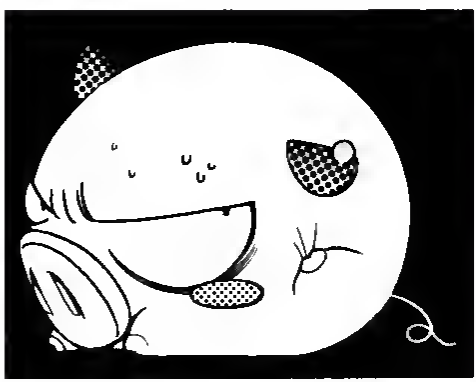
TATSU...
I'M SO GLAD... I'M REALLY GLAD!
BWAA
UGUU
WILL YOU KNOCK IT OFF?
Heeey!
COMING TO A PLACE LIKE THIS WITHOUT ASKING YOUR GUARDIAN...!
UUUUUU
sob
I WAS PREPARED TO COMMIT RITUAL SUICIDE IF YOU HAD BEEN SULLIED!
AS A WAY OF APOLOGIZING FOR FAILING YOU!
Aah! I'm so glad you're still a child!
Geh!
Hnh hnh!
Grrr.
PLEASE STOP TALKING!

AH, NO! I'M NOT REALLY--
SO YOU ARE ONE OF TETSU'S FRIENDS.
AH! YOU'RE THE BOY FROM THE KATANA SHOP.
!
bow
bow
HELLO TO YOU BOTH! I'M TETSU'S OLDER BROTHER TATSUNOSUKE.
I HOPE TO GET TO KNOW YOU. ♡
DENY IT?!
THIS GUY'S CALLED SUZU AND SHE'S SAYA.

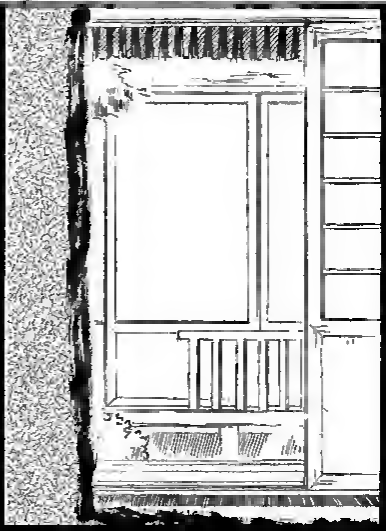
THERE'S NO MISTAKING IT.
IT'S SENSEI.
BUT...

S...
SENSEI...?

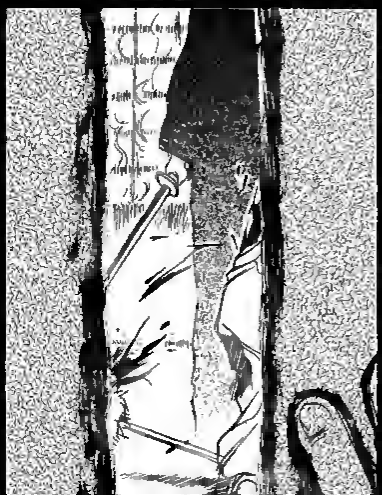
YOU'LL GET DIRTY.
SUZU.
GET AWAY FROM THAT.



Act.16
Don't Let Me Down



I CAN'T STOP THINKING. WHAT IF...



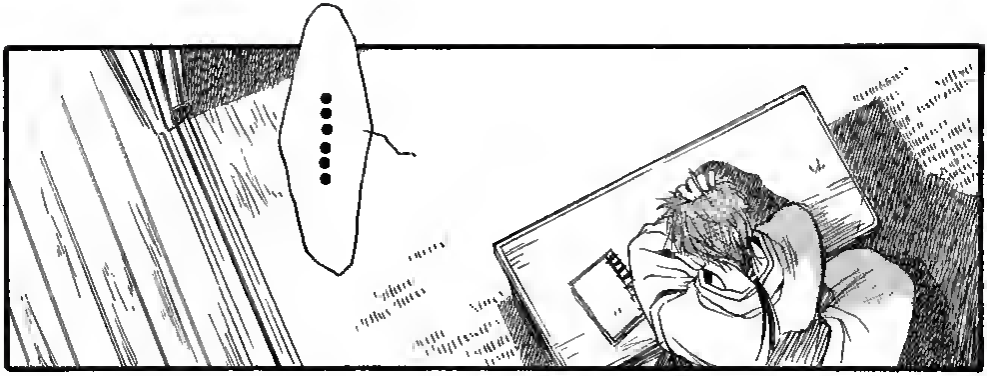
WHAT IF THAT MAN WAS...
IF I FIND OUT WHO THAT MAN IS, WILL I...

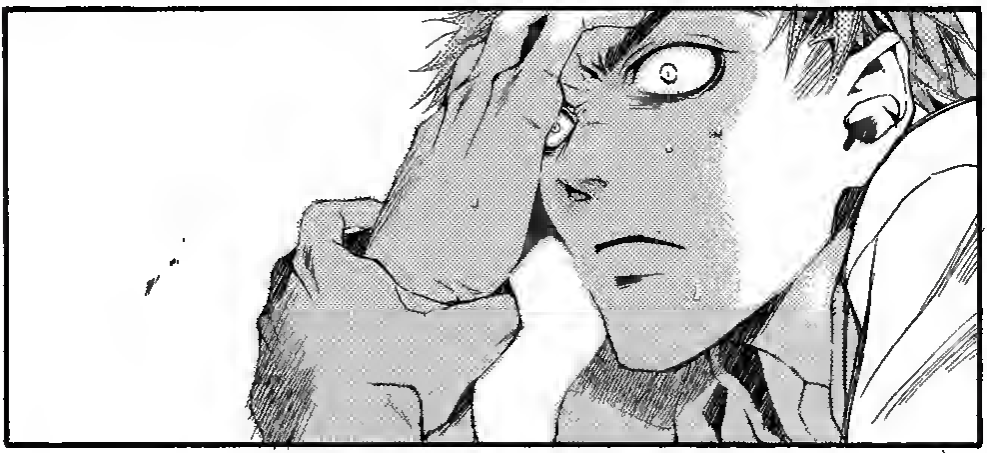
WILL I...
Can't you just stay like
WILL I...

.....
AH, SO THAT'S WHY...
...YAMANAMI-SAN IS SO NERVOUS.
NEVER-MIND THAT!
I STILL HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE REASON IS.

TETSU'S EXPERIENCED LOVE AT FIFTEEN!
LISTEN WHEN PEOPLE ARE TALKING!
WHAT DO YOU THINK, TATSUNOSUKE-SAN?
HUH?
WHY DO YOU THINK HE'S SO WORRIED?
UH. I, UH...
I THINK IT'S NOTHING TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT.
HE'S PROBABLY JUST LOVESICK, RIGHT?
Ha ha ha...
AH! THAT GIRL!
NOT, Y'KNOW, IN FRONT OF THE OLDER BROTHER.
We'll set him off.
WHAT?! I HAVEN'T HEARD THIS, HEISUKE!!
RIGHT. WE'LL BE GOING, THEN.
AH, YOU THREE?

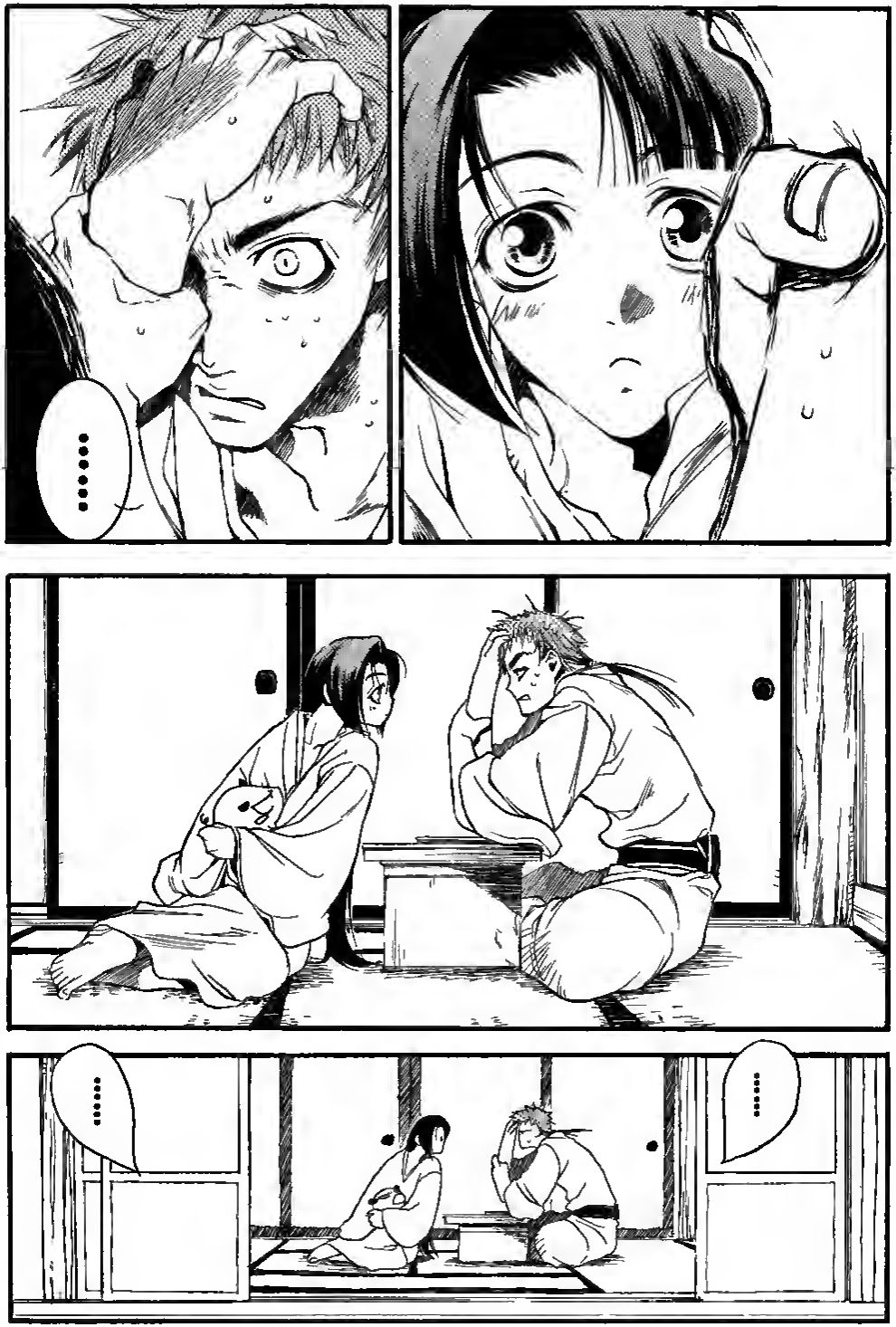
It's carved into our brains!
You got it...
I CAN TRUST YOU TO ACT LIKE MEN, NOT BOYS, YES?
THIS SHIMABARA INCIDENT HAS PUT A NEARLY FATAL STRESS ON MY STOMACH, AND MANY OF MY OTHER INTERNAL ORGANS AS WELL...
Ha ha ha...
CAN I TRUST YOU NOT TO FOOL AROUND WITH MY LITTLE BROTHER AGAIN?
NUH?
NOT THAT!
ABOUT LOSING HIS VIRGINITY AT AGE FIFTEEN?
...REALLY
BUT I WONDER IF HE'S ALL RIGHT...





IF I DON'T...

...HURRY UP AND MAKE HIM FORGET...



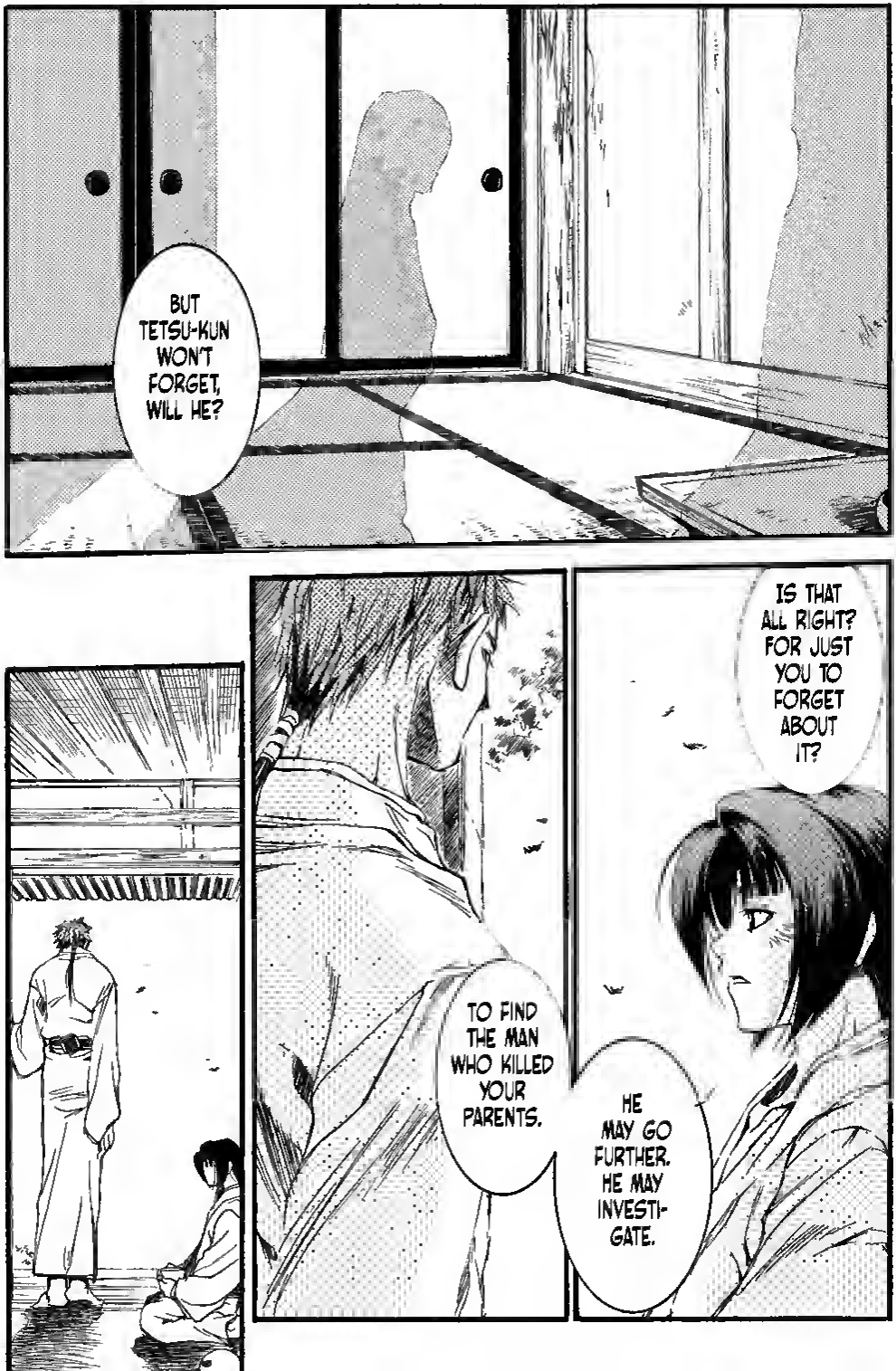
HMM.
?
ぴく…
WHAT IS IT...?
WH--
IS THAT... SO...?
ぱっ
You need to be more jumpy!
THAT'S NO GOOD. THAT'S NOT A TATSUNOSUKE REACTION AT ALL.

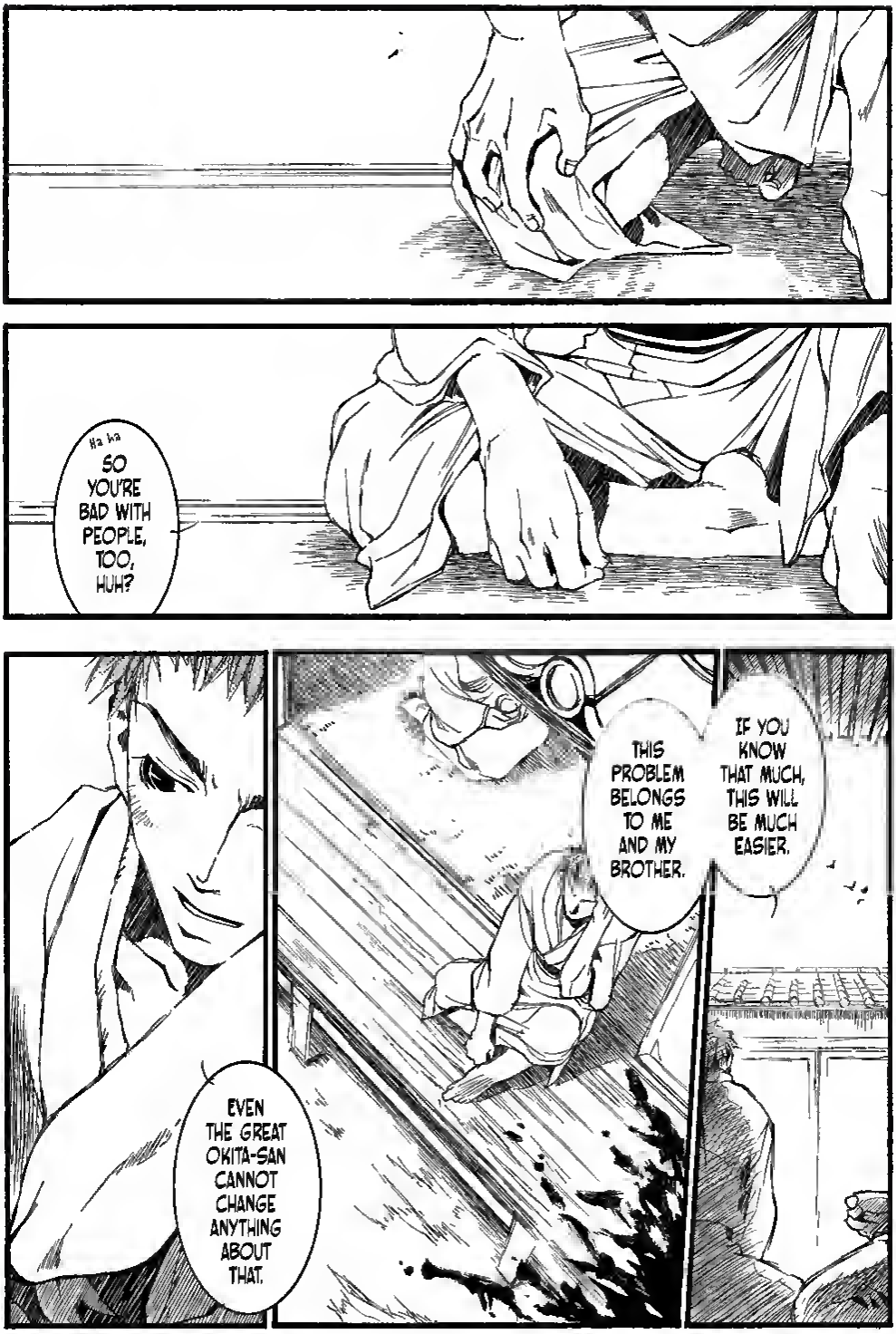
WHAT IN THE WORLD...

I DON'T MEAN TETSU-KUN.
...MOODS, YOU KNOW. BY TOMORROW HE'LL BE COMPLETELY--
...HE'S NO LONGER A CHILD, NOT YET A MAN...
WELL..
...IS WITH THE INTENSE BROODING?
I MEAN YOU.
WHY, DOES MY FACE LOOK STRANGE TO YOU?
Ha ha...

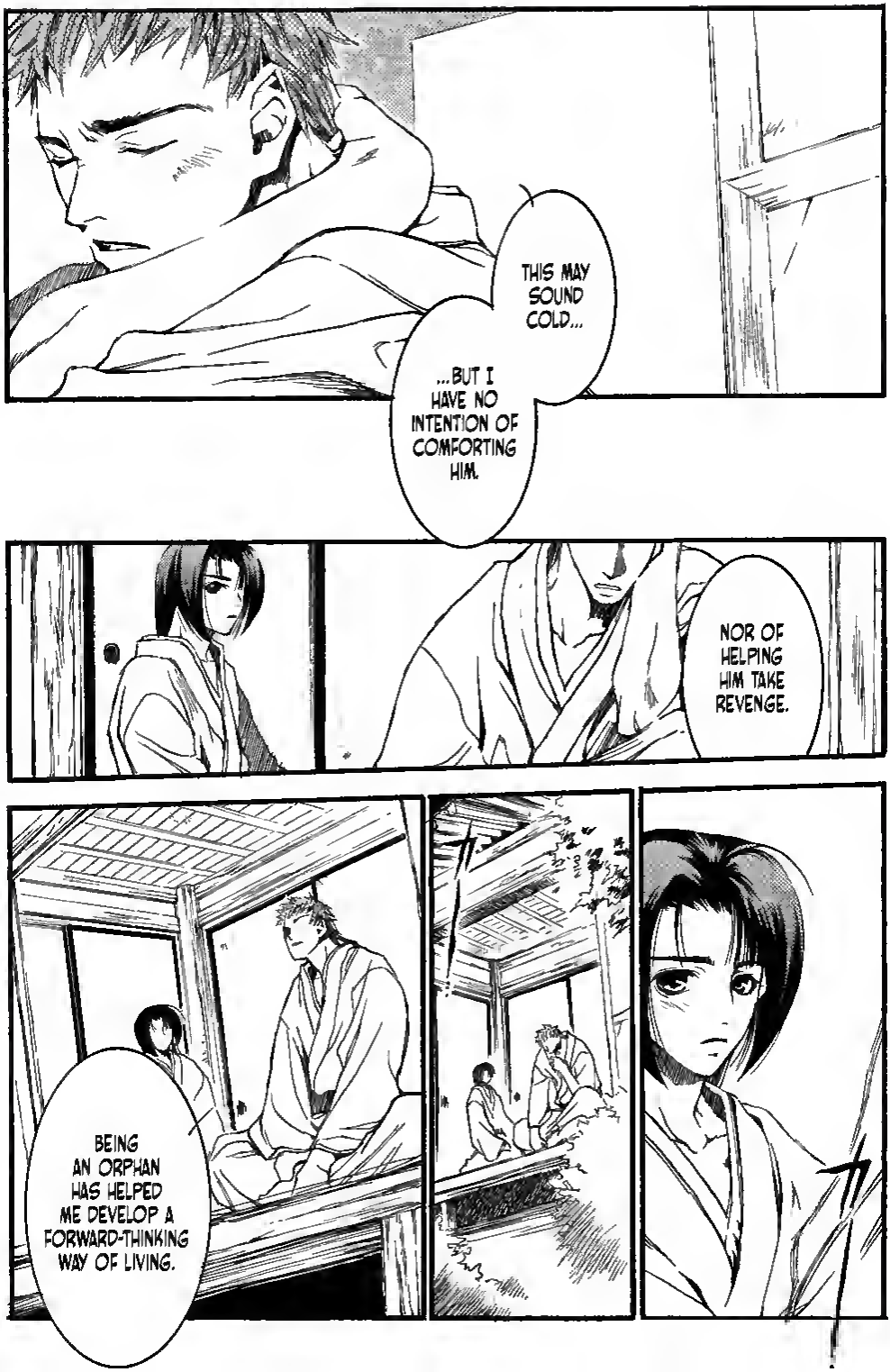
HMM... IT ISN'T JUST THAT YOU'RE BROODING...
...IT'S THAT SOMETHING SO EXTREME MUST HAVE OCCURRED TO MAKE YOU EXPRESS YOUR MOOD SO PLAINLY.
IT'S WORRYING ME.
HEY, LOOK.
BOTH YOU AND TETSU-KUN HAVE IT.
THAT'S ENOUGH OF YOUR CURIOSITY.
WERE THIS ABOUT A WOMAN, THAT LOOK WOULD BE OVERKILL.
OKITA-SAN?

YOU SEE, HE'S HAD A LOT OF NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES IN HIS LIFE.
HOW CAN I CONVINCE YOU TO COMPLY?
WHEN TETSU-KUN WAKES UP, I'D LIKE FOR YOU NOT TO ASK HIM ABOUT YESTERDAY.
AND THAT'S WHY YOU'RE TRYING TO FORGET IT?
CAN'T I?

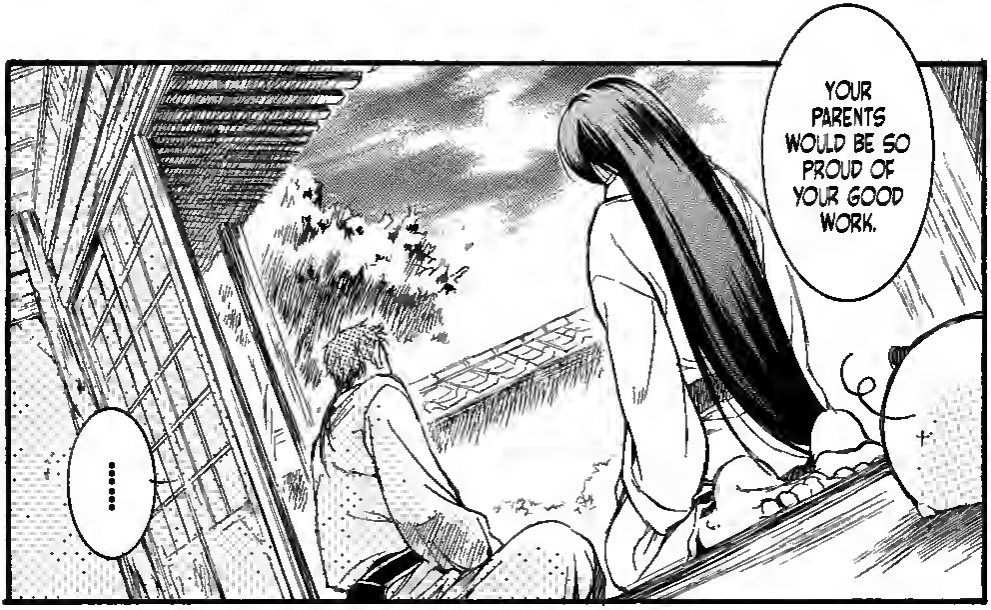

BUT TETSU-KUN WON'T FORGET, WILL HE?
IS THAT ALL RIGHT? FOR JUST YOU TO FORGET ABOUT IT?
HE MAY GO FURTHER. HE MAY INVESTI-GATE.
TO FIND THE MAN WHO KILLED YOUR PARENTS.


Ha ha
SO YOU'RE BAD WITH PEOPLE, TOO, HUH?
EVEN THE GREAT OKITA-SAN CANNOT CHANGE ANYTHING ABOUT THAT.
THIS PROBLEM BELONGS TO ME AND MY BROTHER.
IF YOU KNOW THAT MUCH, THIS WILL BE MUCH EASIER.

BUT?
BUT...
I'M SORRY THAT YOU TAKE OFFENSE.
I'M VERY SORRY.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU TWO...
LOCKING IT UP DEEP IN YOUR HEART...
...WILL SOON PROVE MORE THAN YOU CAN BEAR.


THIS MAY SOUND COLD...
...BUT I HAVE NO INTENTION OF COMFORTING HIM.
NOR OF HELPING HIM TAKE REVENGE.
BEING AN ORPHAN HAS HELPED ME DEVELOP A FORWARD-THINKING WAY OF LIVING.

I DON'T THINK ABOUT MY PARENTS. I THINK ONLY ABOUT MONEY.
REALLY...
THERE ISN'T TIME TO SIGH OVER YESTERDAY'S TRAGEDY WHEN YOU MUST WORK TODAY FOR TOMORROW'S FOOD. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
...I'M A TERRIBLE SON.
.....
AND THAT ALONE IS ENOUGH.
...IS TO RAISE TETSU TO BE A PROPER ADULT.
THE ONE HONOR I CAN OFFER THEM...



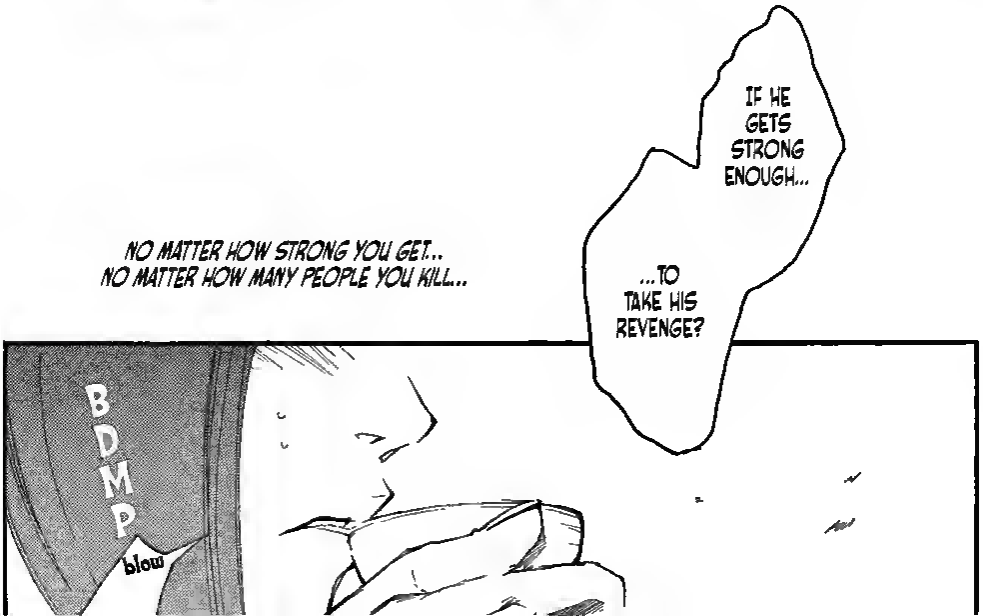
I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO MAKE HIM FORGET...

...TO PREVENT SOMETHING WORSE FROM HAPPENING TO HIM.

AND THEN...
AND THEN...
WHY? WHY?!
WHY DID THAT MAN--?!

WHY COULDN'T EVERYTHING HAVE BEEN ALL RIGHT?
WHY DO OBSTACLES KEEP APPEARING IN MY WAY?!
WHY?!
TETSU JUST LIVES. HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT I GO THROUGH!
HE PUSHED HIS WAY INTO THE SHINSENGUMI!

.....
...WHAT'S THAT GOING TO CHANGE?
IF HE GETS STRONGER...


IF HE GETS STRONG ENOUGH...
...TO TAKE HIS REVENGE?
NO MATTER HOW STRONG YOU GET...
NO MATTER HOW MANY PEOPLE YOU KILL...
BDMP
blow

IF YOU HAVE THAT MUCH POWER...
COUGH!!
COUGH!!
COUGH!!
.....
JUST... CHOKED A BIT. SILLY ME.
Ha ha...
I'M SORRY.

.....
GOING ON IN FRONT OF YOU LIKE THIS...
AH, I'M SORRY.
ONE THING...
...I WANT TO ASK YOU.
BY IGNORING THEM, ARE WOUNDS OF THE HEART...
IF YOU GET THIS POWERFUL...

...THAT EASY...
...TO HEAL?
...NO ONE...
AT LEAST...
...I THINK MINE HAVE HEALED.

YOU'RE SAYING...
...HE HASN'T EATEN ALL DAY?
Cooking!
Oho.
Yur
HE'S NOT SICK. HE'S WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING.
I EVEN TOLD HIM BIG SIS AYU WAS COOKING TODAY!
"I DON'T WANT ANY," HE SAID.
That's what he said.
THOSE WHO LAUGH AT AYU'S MEALS WILL CRY OVER AYU'S MEALS!
THAT BEING SAID...
...I'M TAKING A SUPER-HUGE PORTION FOR MYSELF!
UNFAIR!
AH, HEY!

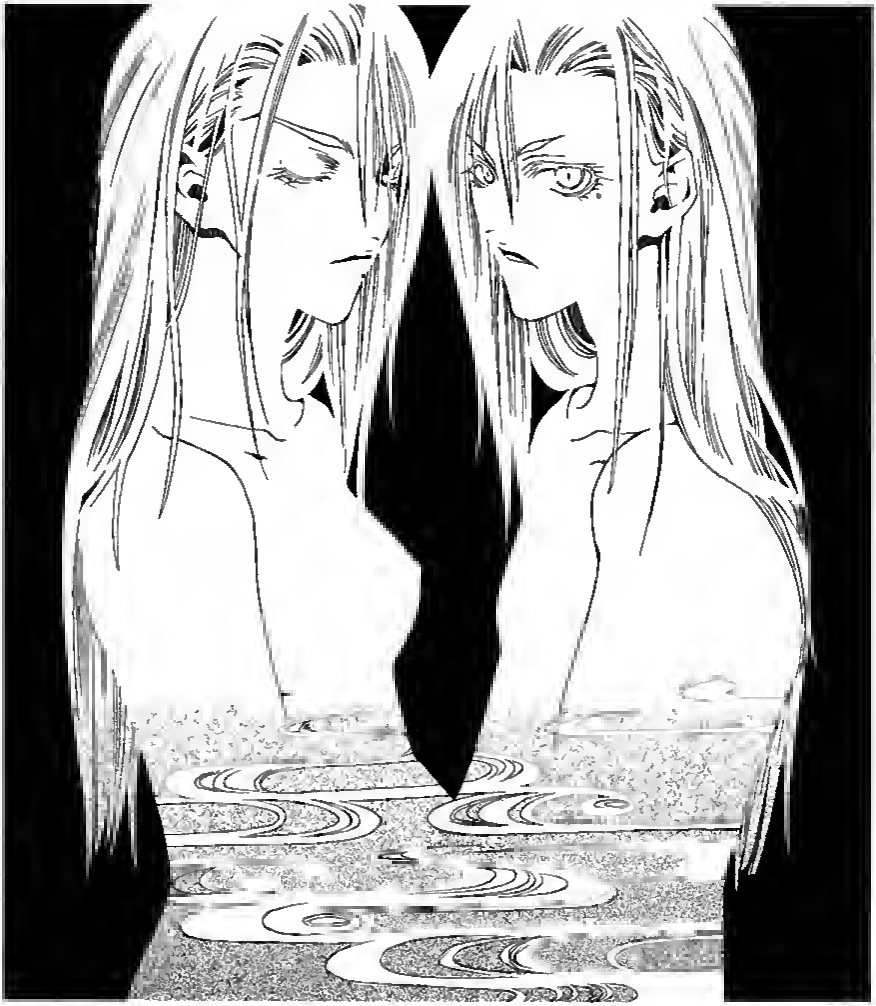
EEEEK!!
OH NO YOU DON'T !!
WHAT'S WITH YOU TODAY?
BUT BIG SIS AYU!
"YOU MUST EAT AT MEALTIMES," RIGHT?
AH, THAT IS... UM...
These men...
No way!
DOES BIG SIS AYU HAVE SPECIAL FEELINGS FOR TETSU-KUN?!
THAT'S FINE, SAY WHATEVER YOU LIKE.
Kyaa!
TONIGHT WILL BE MY GREATEST MASTERPIECE!

THAT'S BECAUSE EEEVERYONE...
...WILL EAT IT TOGETHER, HAPPILY.
GOT IT?
I'VE GOTTA EAT SOMETHING.
KNOCK IT OFF.
GURRGLL
GURRGLL
GURRGLL
SUZU...

I HAVE TO FIND OUT.
I HAVE TO FIND HIM...SO I CAN ASK.
EVEN IF IT DESTROYS OUR RELATIONSHIP.

!
THAT WOMAN...

YAMA-
ZAKI?!



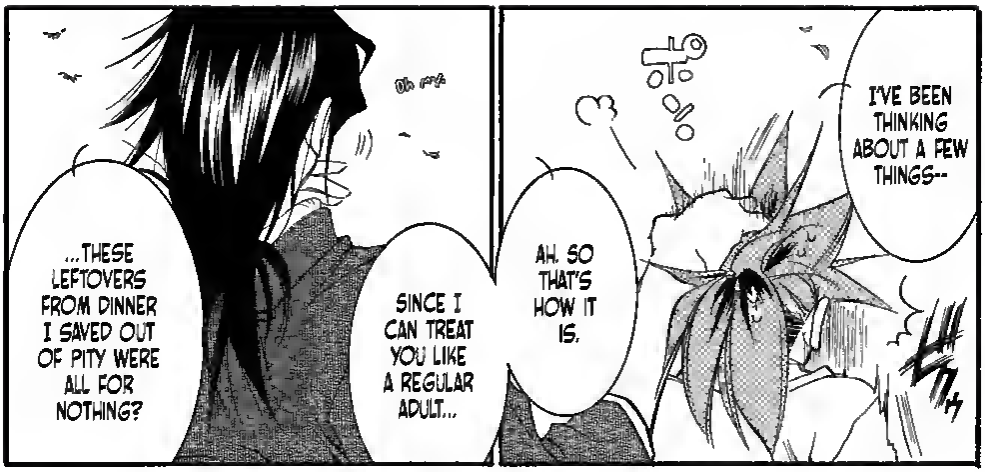
Act.17
I'm Looking Through You

.....
YAMA-ZAKI...?!
...TETSU-NOSUKE-KUN...

Tetsunosuke-KUN
Tetsunosuke-KUN
...nosuke-KUN... (echo)
No.
It's nothing.
Mm...
AH! NO, NO, WAIT A MINUTE!
SEE? ♡
Umm...
YOU'RE...
...BIG SIS AYU?!

WOW, YOU REALLY LOOK ALIKE!
I MEAN, OF COURSE.
HE'S A CROSS-DRESSER IN THREE INCHES OF MAKEUP.
AREN'T YOU GOING TO SAY THAT I'M "MUCH PRETTIER," OR SOMETHING?
Sweatin'
I GET IT!
WHEN HE CROSS-DRESSES...
...HE MAKES UP HIS FACE AIMING TO LOOK LIKE YOU.
.....
THE MAKEUP'S OBVIOUS.
ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THE MOLE UNDER THE EYE!
DINNER-TIME!!
THE USUAL BIG SIS AYU
BUT...
...THEN...
ATTACHABLE MOLES ARE PART OF DISGUISES. ♡
There's different types, too. ♡
They're a tool to increase your sex appeal. ♡
TETSUNOSUKE-KUN! DO YOU WANT TO TRY PUTTING ONE ON YOUR FOREHEAD?
NAH, I'M GOOD.

ANYWAYS...
...WHY ARE YOU GOING OUT SO MUCH LATELY?
HOLD IT!
I'M ASKING THE QUESTIONS FIRST.
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU TODAY?
YOU WOULDN'T EVEN COME TO DINNER.
.....
DOESN'T MATTER.
I'M NOT A KID ANYMORE. I CAN BROOD.

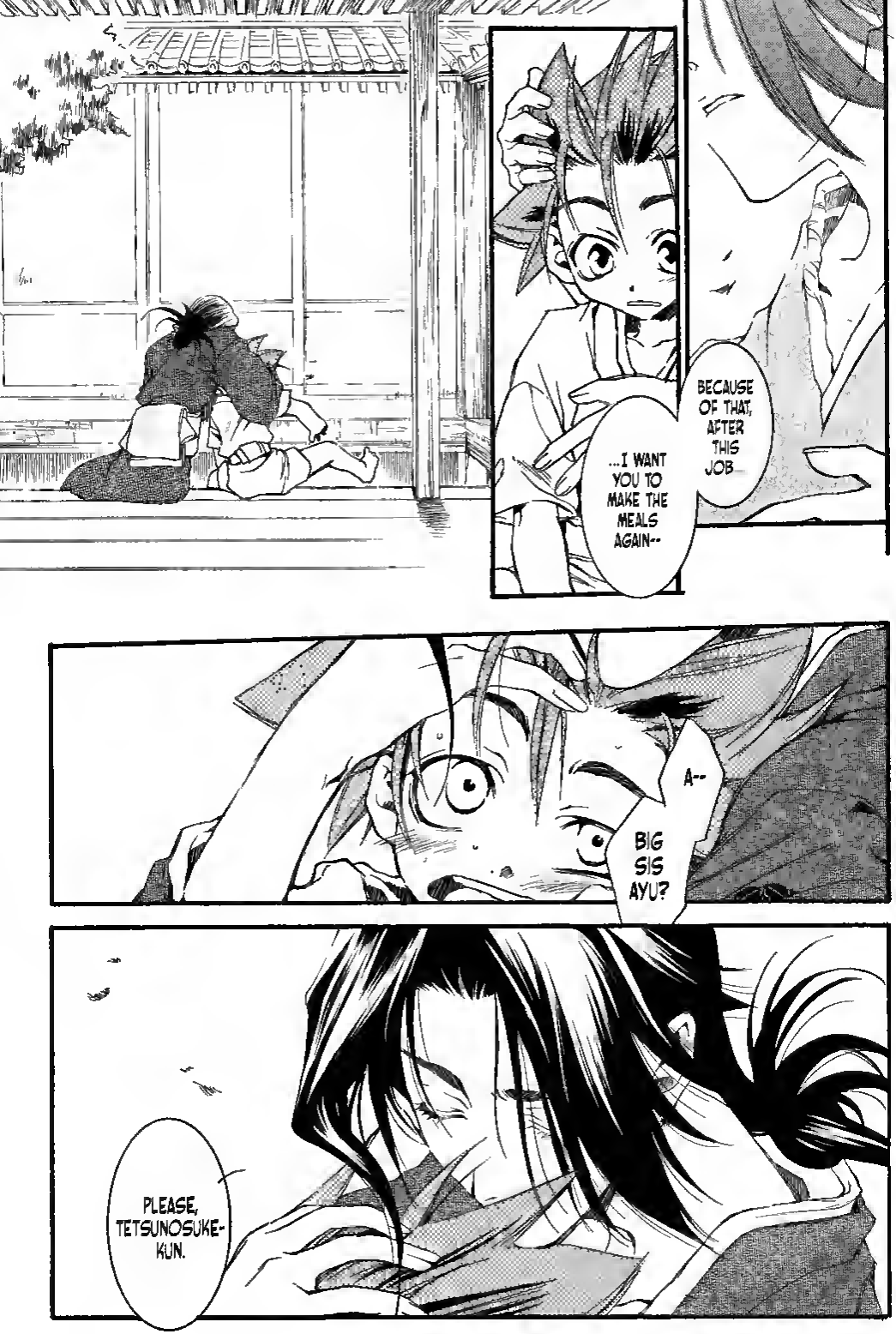

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT A FEW THINGS--
AH. SO THAT'S HOW IT IS.
SINCE I CAN TREAT YOU LIKE A REGULAR ADULT...
...THESE LEFTOVERS FROM DINNER I SAVED OUT OF PITY WERE ALL FOR NOTHING?

EH?!
THAT WAS RUDE OF ME. FOOD THAT'S GONE COLD ISN'T FIT FOR CONSUMPTION.
I'LL THROW IT OUT FOR THE DOGS.
No! I'm sorry.
Let me eat it!

?
Tatsu?
I'M ENVIOUS OF YOUR BROTHER.
THAT'S NICE. TETSUNOSUKE-KUN IS HONEST.
Hee hee.

WHEN I WAS SMALL...
...I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT TOUGH QUESTIONS AT ALL.
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOUR SITUATION NOW, BUT...
.....
...WHEN IT'S TIME TO MAKE YOUR CHOICE, BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF.
OR YOU'LL WASTE ALL THIS UPBEAT ENERGY.
RIGHT?
ぽん
.....

?
WHAT IS IT?
IT'S NOTHING.
AYU-NEE REALLY...
...FEELS LIKE AN OLDER SISTER TO ME.
ALL RIGHT, NOW IT'S MY QUESTION!

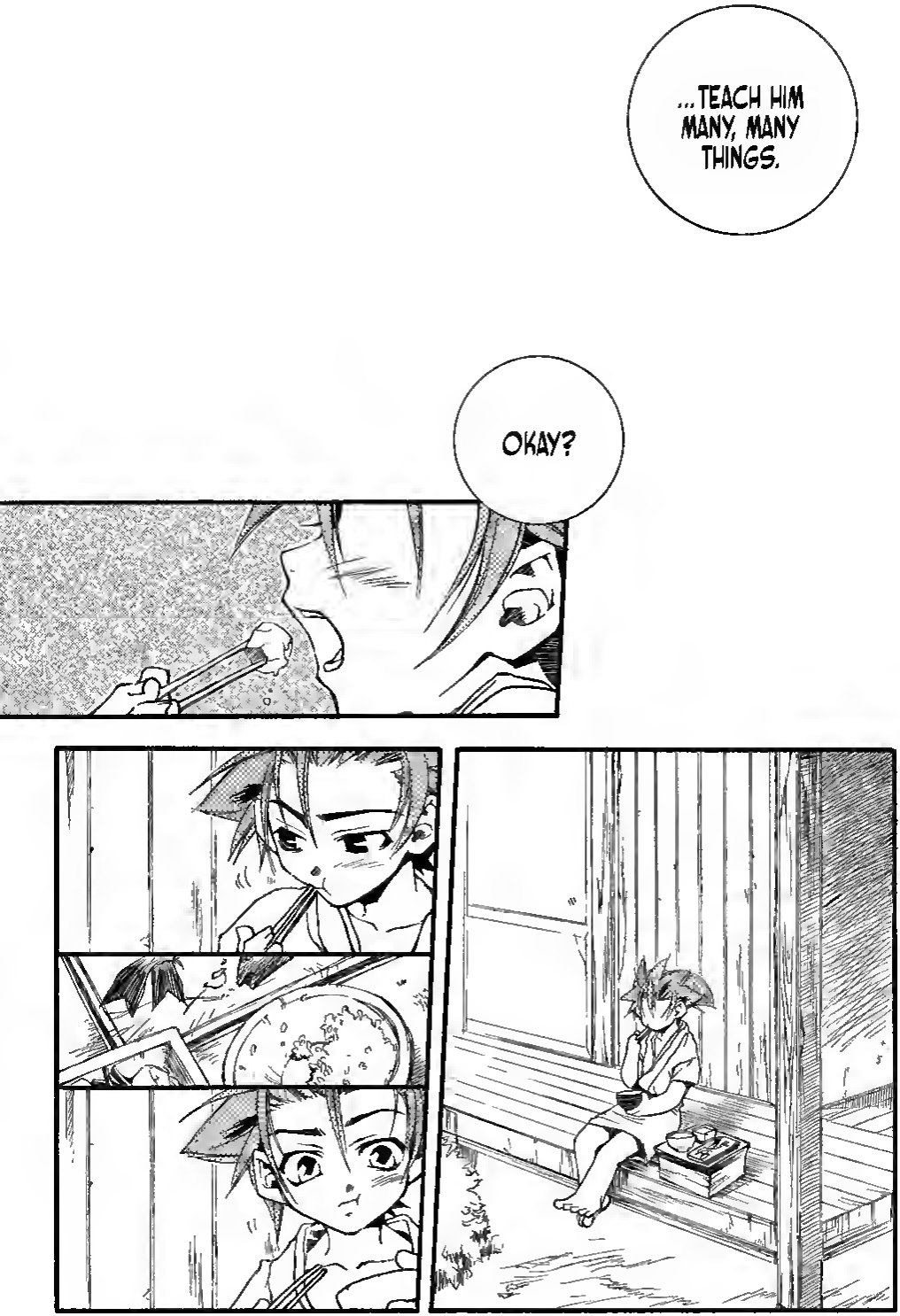

BECAUSE OF THAT, AFTER THIS JOB...
...I WANT YOU TO MAKE THE MEALS AGAIN--
A--
BIG SIS AYU?
PLEASE, TETSUNOSUKE-KUN.

EVEN A LITTLE BIT HELPS.

GET ALONG WITH HIM.

YOU CAN FIGHT WITH HIM...

AND TEACH HIM ALL KINDS OF THINGS.
LIKE FUN THINGS...
...AND HAPPY THINGS...
...AND FUNNY THINGS.
IN MY PLACE...


...TEACH HIM MANY, MANY THINGS.
OKAY?

"IN MY PLACE."

AIZU HEADQUARTERS,
KURODANI KONKAI
KOUMYOU TEMPLE
.....

THE SERVANTS OF OSAKA REPORT THAT THINGS HAVE SAFELY CONCLUDED.
THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR TROUBLE.
PLEASE DO READ IT.
ALSO, THERE WAS AN INCIDENT THE OTHER DAY ON SHIJOU ROAD. A FULL REPORT IS HERE.
WITH THIS, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR KATAMORI-SAMA.
WELL, THEN. WHERE DO WE BEGIN?
THE MOSQUITOES HAVE GOTTEN WORSE.
AIZU BUSINESS MANAGER, TOSHIMA KIHEE

...OUR INVESTIGATION REVEALED THEM TO BE WARRIORS OF CHOUSHUU.
OF COURSE...
THERE WAS A FIGHT BETWEEN OUR SOLDIERS AND OUTLAW WARRIORS.
THIS LEADS US TO BELIEVE THERE ARE A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF CHOUJIN IN KYO.
WE'VE ALSO BECOME AWARE THAT THE MANY UNEXPLAINED FIRES ARE ALSO THEIR DOING.
YET, IF THEY ARE PLANNING SOMETHING...
.....
...CHOUSHUU HAS WANTED REVENGE ON THE AIZU PROVINCE.
SINCE AUGUST 18TH OF LAST YEAR...

KONDOU.
...SO FAR...
...THEY'VE MADE NO OVERT MOVES.
THESE SO-CALLED "PATRIOTS"...
...MOST OF THEM ARE YOUNG, ABOUT THE AGE OF TWENTY, YES?
.....
YOUTH IS BEAUTIFUL, BUT YOUTH IS ALSO RASH.
THEY DO NOT THINK AHEAD. THEY TAKE DANGEROUS ACTIONS.
THEY THINK THEMSELVES IMMORTAL, AND WORSHIP MADNESS.

DO NOT WORRY.
IF WE WAIT FOR AN INCIDENT, IT WILL ALREADY BE TOO LATE.
WE MUST PREPARE SOME SORT OF PREEMPTIVE MEASURE.
EVERY-THING...
...IS ALREADY IN MOTION.

!
ドン!!
DON'T COME IN!
YOU'RE AN EYESORE.
BIG--
……
ズズズ…

BIG SIS AYU.
SHE WENT OUT ON A MISSION.
I WANT TO KNOW.
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?
YOU KNOW.
SO STOP LYING TO ME.
I REALLY DON'T KNOW. NOT ABOUT *THAT.*
SO LET ME ASK YOU...
...WHY YOU'RE ASKING *ME?*

EVEN IF I HAVE TO BEAT IT OUT OF YOU...
...I'LL GET MY ANSWERS.
BUT I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT OFFENDING YOU.
WHEN THEY SAY THEY CAN'T TELL ME, THEY CAN'T TELL ME.
I ASKED BIG SIS AYU AND A VICE COMMANDER.
7
SO. WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOU KNOW?
ARE YOU GOING TO TRY TO FAKE YOUR WAY IN LIKE LAST TIME?
THAT SO?
BRAVE WORDS, RUNT.

BIG SIS AYU...
...MIGHT NOT COME BACK FROM THIS MISSION.
.....
I DON'T KNOW.
SHE WAS SAYING SOME STRANGE THINGS...
...AND CRYING...
...TO ME...
...ABOUT YOU.

SO?
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?
WHAT COULD YOU DO?
SHE TOOK A DANGEROUS JOB.
ARE YOU GOING TO STOP HER?
YOU? THE BRAVE BRAT PAGE?
AND WHAT IF SHE DIES?
YOU...

IF THAT'S THE JOB...
...THERE'S NO WAY TO STOP HER.
DASH
DAMN YOU!

?!
YOU'RE NOT HUMAN!

ブル
ブルブル…
I'LL TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT.
ドドド

I'VE THROWN AWAY...
...SUCH USELESS EMOTIONS.

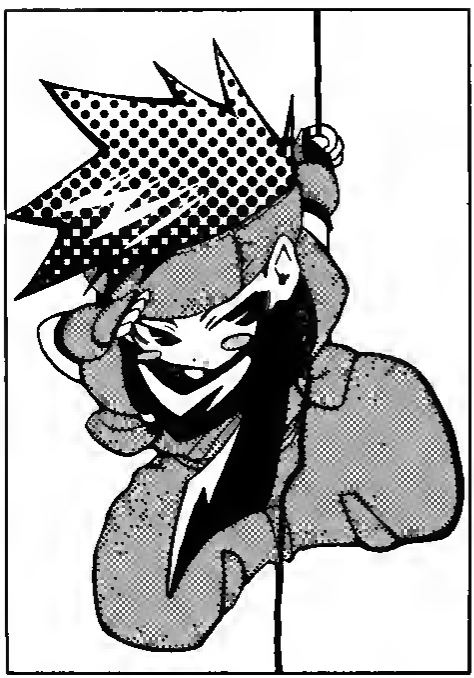
AAAH.
RAIN CAN BE SO ANNOYING.
HMFF!
I HATE THE DAMP!
DO YOU?
HMM...
IF YOU ASK ME...
...I LOVE THE WET, STEAMY ATMOSPHERE.

.....
THEY'VE KEPT YOU HERE FOR SEVEN DAYS ALREADY?
SOMETIMES I GO OFF TO GION AT NIGHT

Heh.
SUCH A WASTE FOR SOMEONE LIKE YOU.
THERE ARE A LOT OF GUYS LIKE THAT HERE.
OH?
THAT'S RIGHT. RECENTLY...
'CAUSE WOMEN ARE DEMONS!
Heh heh heh.
THEY TELL US TO NOT BRING WOMEN IN HERE.
SORRY.
WILL YOU CALL ME WHEN YOU WANT YOUR HAIR COMBED AGAIN?

...THE MASTER OF MASUYA WAS TALKING ABOUT...
...SOME GIRL WHO TROLLS FOR MEN AND INFORMATION.
A GOOD-LOOKING HAIRDRESSER WITH A MOLE UNDER HER EYE.

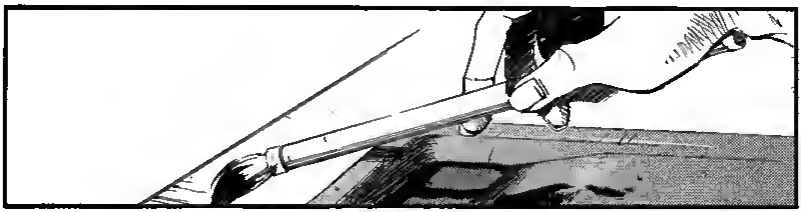
Continued in Peace Maker 4



In the Next

PEACE MAKER
ピースメーカー

With a sister lost,
Now two brothers seek revenge
While the arson laughs.



Coming Soon!